Oct. 8, 1975

Dear Hubert,

Autumn has at last come to us: this summer the heat remained longer than usual. The air is quite cool and pleasant now. The blossoms of the tree smell in our garden. The scent is sweet but it somehow stirs up the desires inside me. I don't like it very much because it makes me restless.
Quite recently my grandfather, the father of my mother, died of cancer. He was 85. My letter is usually quite long, but if it is not interesting at all for you, I'm awfully sorry and forgive me. And also please don't mind any more to write to me in block letters. In whatever way it is written, I'm happy to get a letter from you.
As I told you, my brother, 26, is going to engage this autumn. So my parents bought his fiancé a diamond engage ring. The size of the diamond is like this and it cost about 290 Pounds. Don't you think it silly to spend that amount of money on the ring? His fiancé is short and fattish and I've nicknamed her as 'pig'. So I always say to my mother, "Hey mother, it's like 'a diamond for a pig'!"
Teaching at Notre Dame Girls' High School, my alma mater, is monotonous, boring and unbearable. But on the other hand, I'm beginning to feel recently that I'm learning something new from teaching. I think this is a good discovery. But the bad point is that other teachers are so often having a chat about their little children or about the too domestic matters. I'm fed up with hearing them. So in my spare time in the teachers' room, I'm either reading something or speaking with the American sisters. By the way the Emperor and the Empress of Japan are paying a visit to the United States from Sep. 30 for 8 days or so.
And finally how do you feel about your new university life? I hope it's interesting and enjoyable. I'm looking forward to hearing from you quite soon.
So Hubert, good-bye and good luck.

Namiko

Oct. 21, 1975

Dear Hubert,

What a nice letter you gave me! And I'm glad to hear that your college life is not bad except your room. If your room is so small, I wonder if it is an attic or something.
You mentioned you applied for a job as international telephonist, but how can you find time to work besides being a student? As a matter of fact, one year ago when I was senior, I applied for a job as international operator to Japan International Telephone and Telegram Co., Ltd. I passed the paper examination in English, but after having an interview with the staffs of that company, they informed me of their not adopting me. I suppose they didn't adopt me, because I didn't look sociable, and strong enough to endure the work. By the way, it just came to my mind that some day I'd like to talk with you on the telephone.
Well, Hubert, I'm going to take an exam of Cambridge certificate of Proficiency in English on the 10, 11th December. I don't like exams; I'm really fed up with them. But if I pass it, it will be a good qualification of English when applying for a foreign university. As for what I'm going to do in the future, I'm just thinking and thinking and thinking and thinking and thinking and thinking and thinking ...!
But sooner or later, I must decide anyway. My present social obligation is solely to teach at Notre Dame until the end of the next January.
By the way, did I tell you I play the violin? I started practicing it at 12. Now I'm not having a private lesson, but quite often I play it just for enjoyment. It somehow helps me to

be out of the nihilistic mood for a moment. But since my performance is awful, I assure you will get stomach indigestion or terrible headache to hear it!
Just a couple of days ago a friend of my mother visited our home. Her husband, a professor, is on his research trip to Canada, the U.K. and Europe. As he has such a dark brown skin, his wife got so worried and felt shame that he would go to the white men's countries and so she desperately tried to put powder or something on his face, only in vain, to make it look more white. But she's a very good natured woman.
In Japan it rains quite often in autumn. But we also sometimes have a beautiful weather in which the sky is blue and the air is fresh.
I want to read D.H. Lawrence once in English someday. I may be a little sentimental.
Anyway, je dois te dire adieu, maintenant, mon cher Hubert.

Namiko

Nov. 2nd, 1975

Dear Hubert,

I'm quite surprised at your letter, but I'm not shocked. I'm not sure how to start this letter, but the moment I read your letter, I began to tremble.

Let me tell you one most important point first of all: I want to come to Europe, Holland or Aachen. When? Next March at the soonest I hope. Because as I told you, I must teach at Notre Dame until at the end of January, and I have at present eight pupils to tutor mainly at my home. I must take care of some of them to help them succeed in their exams until February.

Besides I need some time to prepare and earn some money to get there.

One thing which I definitely decided after coming back from Europe is to go abroad again as soon as I can. I was hesitating whether to go to America or to Europe. I thought I should go to America first, because chances to go abroad are limited and it's better to go to a different place.

Meantime, however, there was always in my mind about the thing in Europe. One is because you're there, and the other I'm still attracted by many other things and places in Europe. But now I think I've quite determined on this point. Next time I go abroad, I go to Europe again.

But even if the money problem does not matter much, there's another problem for me, though. That's my melancholy. You believe it or not, melancholy is my constant bad habit of mind. At any time it comes to me. In such a time, I get very very depressed and quite often think of death. You said you judged from my last letter that I'm in a good mood, but it's not quite true. Only I thought I had to refrain myself to tell you all about my mental problem in each letter to you. Anyway I'm awfully sorry that my letter gave you a kind of frivolous impression. And I really hope you're already recovered from your awful depression. I know how awful it is.

And so if I come to live in Europe and am attacked by this melancholy and depression, will you help me somehow? In Oxford, melancholy frequented me when I was alone and I remember saying to Mrs. Snaith that nobody could help me. My mental weakness is one of my greatest problems. As far as I'm at home, I try either to deceive myself when melancholy comes or to let it come and pass away, and I somehow manage to keep me going alive. But I feel great fear about this when I think of living in a foreign country quite long. (My mother told me if I die abroad, our family will be ruined because of the cost of funeral and other miscellaneous.)

If I'm wrong, pardon me, but I fear that what made you write such a serious and unexpected (for me) letter is your awful depression. I hope not. I hope you could have written the same kind of letter if you had not been depressed.

I'm still doubting if it's not a dream, I'm dreaming a dream, for I have never been liked by a man personally (I've never liked any other man in the way I like you now.) To tell you the truth, when I read the lines of your letter, I almost felt like crying with joy.

Can you understand what I've said so far? In your last letter I have some points which I can't understand quite well: you mentioned you want to live together with someone in one house. Who's someone? Male or female? (Even if you think me ***stupid***, I still don't understand.)

And you said you don't feel security at all. But by security you mean physical security or mental security? To me, both securities are seemingly given, but I'm ashamed that I'm living rather in an easy and lukewarm way. (In my mind the kind of job does not matter, but actually I can't do all kinds of job.) As for university, don't please take me for example. I don't think I'm a typical case. My university was a language college and all. I hated the students there, atmosphere in general there, the city of Osaka, the lectures, and many other things. But at any rate, I wanted to get B.A. because in Japan, university is no longer a place where only a selected few go. One out of four or three is a college student, aged between 18 and 22 or older. It is overcrowded. Anyway, I practically attended lectures only for three years and got graduation thesis during that period. When I was senior, I spent the days at home studying mainly literature which I liked better than language proper.
It's up to you whether you give up university or not, but I personally want you to stay for the time being and think.

At any rate, could you wait for my coming there to you (say, another several months at the shortest!) exactly as what you are now? I mean I fear you will change your mind.

And about jobs there, I really can't believe I've found one. It's true I've a teacher's licence but it's only practically valid in Japan, I think. I mean I can't teach only with B.A. What can I teach? English? I myself must still be taught English more.
And if I can find any other job, I can't speak German at all, so I can't manage the work. Moreover I've never done the jobs except teaching. The matter of job also makes me worry. And thinking about the things after one year stay, I wonder how the things are going on. I worry and fear about everything. I'm sure I'll disturb you much and will be your burden.

About your coming to Japan, I really desire it. But don't be hasty. I'm not proud of Japan at all.

The following passage someone wrote I like:
"They say that life is short; to those who look back it may seem short enough; but to those who look forward, it is horribly long, endless. Sometimes one feels one cannot endure it. ... The thought of living for ever is horrible."

Well, dear Hubert, I stop here now, though I fear I miss something more to say. Almost 10 days in which I must wait for your letter to come is always terribly long. But I'm really glad that you invite me to Europe. I don't think I can go to sleep tonight. So now I say good-bye to you.

Namiko

(The following passage had been written in pencil)

As I can't sleep now at all, I write little more on this sheet. In case you continue university, you stay in Utrecht. But you said it's hard to look for accommodation in Utrecht, so there wouldn't be no place to live if I go there. Nevertheless I rather want you to stay at university. For one thing, even if you don't think you'll be happy anyway finishing university, I'm afraid you're likely to regret some time in the future if you give it up now, for it'll be harder to enter university and study as

one grows older, I think. But unless you are close at hand to me, when I'm there, it's meaningless. What you and I want to do most now is to see each other as soon as possible, is it right? Do you understand what I mean?

And for example, what kind of job do you think I can do? Can I teach Japanese or flower arrangement (though I've not learnt it at all)?

Why don't you make yourself registered as a long absenter and arrange the think in the way that you can resume university when you feel like it later instead of completely
giving up?

In my opinion teaching does not look quite suitable to you, for I think it's highly probable , you'll feel it quite boring. I don't know what and how to say more. Or have I said too much? I may not be so logical because on one hand I urge you to stay at university and on the other I say teaching is boring. Maybe my head at this moment is a little bit tired, but now I can't help but write in this way.

I want to see you really as soon as possible. But your last letter gave me an impression of a sudden change on your side. I don't think you got whimsical in writing to me last time, but you even didn't write to me almost a month in September. (I'm not blaming your for it now at all. At that time I thought you were busy and thus thinking consoled myself and waited patiently for your letter to come.)
Maybe for one thing, your present living condition is too bad and makes you depressed apart from being unable to make friends. I'm really sorry you're in a bad mood.

But when reading the thing about your landlord and his keys, I burst out into laughter, honestly.

So dear Hubert, I really this time say good-bye to you.

Namiko

Nov. 3, 1975

Dear Hubert,

Ever since you wrote your 'strange' letter, I have been getting more and more restless. I read your letter over and over again. As I can't endure the length to wait for your next letter, I can't help but write again in this way.

I wonder what life in Germany will be like. The atmosphere of England looks like a sort of depressing. I may only regard England as a country where I can study, because at present only language I can do is English, though I'm still learning French by myself. I admit England has its own charms, but what I felt instinctively when I was in the European continent was that there I felt freer than in England. Maybe I can study both English and other languages such as German in Europe. (I don't know exactly what I'm talking now.) In short, I worry about languages, perhaps.

My mother is also worrying my future. I talked of you only to my mother. I mean my family member. She wants to know what kind of family you are from. For me it doesn't matter at all, but her way of thinking is a little old and in Japan □family restriction□ (I don't think you understand the words) is stronger than in Europe. Take my brother's case for example, he asked our parents a couple of years ago to find a candidate for his future spouse and my mother asked her eldest sister, whose mother in law introduced us (except me) a daughter of her nephew. The persons concerned arranged the date and place for my brother and that girl to meet. They met there about a year ago and they seemed not to dislike each other, so my brother told the girl's family that he would like to associate with her for some time to know her more and to decide if he would take her as his future wife. But unfortunately he's living and working in Tokyo and couldn't have many chances to meet and know that girl, they decided to write letters. Whenever my brother came back home in Kyoto, once a month or two, he meets her. Thus finally he, or rather the family proposed to the girl and she and her family accepted and just a couple of days ago, their engagement ***ceremony*** (funny word, isn't it) was completed. So far they've already spent quite a money, and even more they'll be going to spend for wedding ceremony, honey moon and furniture preparations. I'm already fed up with their marriage matters. I wonder what they are going to do when they find out that they can't get on well with each other. Will it do any good to their marriage having spent such a lot of money beforehand? The most stupid thing is, that the bride side began to complain about the kind of house they're going to live in, simply because such a small and shabby apartment house would be a shame to the eyes of the neighbouring people of the bride's native home which is a rural small town somewhere in the neighbourhood of Kyoto city.

Anyway, it's absurd. I think they seem to miss something more important. But I don't know exactly what it is. It was actually the fiancée's father who began to complain first. That man first phoned my mother and then my brother who, usually self possessed, got a little bit angry and came back home to discuss the matter. He and my father went to the girl's home and they seemed to discuss the matter with the girl’s parents. But it is my brother and the girl who are going to live in one house. Anyway they seemed to reach a compromise in some way. I'm sorry I've elaborated on all these nonsense but I just wanted to tell you how I'm disgusted with this.

It was this sort of arranged marriage that I have been opposing to in the whole of my life. But to be single or to be married, I think I'll still feel uncertainty. When it comes to my own child if I get one, the uncertainty will even increase.

So, again speaking of my brother's fiancée, who is still a college student and won't earn any money after their marriage, maybe I should pity her a bit, because she'll depend entirely on my brother, financially speaking. But as her home is quite rich, one doesn't have to be sorry at all.

But anyway, the present condition of mine is a pain itself. I mean to communicate with you in this way, living far, far away from you and patiently writing and waiting. Maybe I could phone you, but it'll be very expensive.

If you're nothing to me, and if you say I'm nothing to you, I'll have to make every effort to try to forget you. But it's not so at all. You're really important, and the idea of you is always invading my daily life.

If we can meet again, I think there are lots of things to remain to be talked and to be known by both of us.

Unless and after I meet you again, I don't think I can do any other new thing.

Anyway your words, 'everything is possible' encouraged me greatly.

But again I say, if you had a second opinion and came to think you were joking and not serious, it's O.K., please tell me frankly. It's not yet too late. Nevertheless on my side I want to go to you.

Maybe I wrote too much, too at random. You'll find how irrational and stupid I'm actually is. I may be worthless. But please understand me anyhow.
So, in a few days, I may surprise you with my desultory letter.

Complicated stupid, Namiko

Nov. 8,

1975

Dear Hubert,

I received your letter on 8th, about 2 o'clock p.m. (Japan time). I didn't expect to get it that soon; I thought maybe the coming 12th. So I was very, very happy. You know, on Sundays we don't get mails except special delivery. Ever since your first suggestion, the time I had to wait for your letter to come seemed unbearably long to me, so I tried to disperse my feelings somehow, in vain. I can't go to sleep easily these days. I buy a bottle of whisky and drink. It's quite expensive, but beer does not rapidly make my head rocky. Someday I really want to get totally drunk with you. Even now in writing to you, I'm drinking whisky, but pardon me.

I'm afraid you've got my last impatient letter, soon after, I suppose. In writing that one, I wasn't drunk. But for the second time, I tried to write again before I get your answer. It was still day time and I began to write various strange things, but I dared not to post it. So I tore it up.

I feel I'm beginning to lose control of myself, though I manage to teach in my daily life. You look still quite more reasonable in your way of thinking than mine. But you know there's always much difference (I mean gap) between one's fancy and reality. You may say how about trying things. You're right. One can't get anything without trying.

At any rate, adults are stubborn and too conservative. I mean, I told my father about us. On the whole my parents are not so willing to accept our plan. You may think my parents have nothing to do with our plan. To some extent, I feel so too, but I'm still financially partly depending upon them for food mainly. In short for them, my coming to Europe and live with you looks like a very unimaginable thing. And they, for example worry, "What do you do if you fall ill abroad? As a parent of you, I won't resist flying up to you. If these things happen often, we'll be ruined." I hadn't even mentioned that kind of matter at all to them. It is quite a strange way of thinking. But I can understand what they're feeling in a sense.

Anyway even if they oppose actually (at the moment, they are not opposing, but just worrying, because they're timid in a way like me), I've almost determined to come to you anyway.

The other day, I went to the Japan Travel Bureau to get information about the aircraft fare, visa and such. As for the fare, the cheapest one is 177000 Yen for one way which is the cost of the Soviet airplane company, Aero Float or something. As for return ticket, its cost doesn't get cheaper than flying one way ticket twice.

About visa, it's a bit problem, because if the purpose of staying in one country more than three months is not clear enough, they won't grant it, so I heard. In my case it's neither study nor sightseeing. If it's for work, I'm not sure if they grant it. Anyway I'll try to get more information about this next Monday.

The date of my brother's wedding ceremony is March 28 next year. I'll have to attend it as his sister, though I really hate it. (I like my brother, but by his marrying, I'm afraid he'll become a little stranger. He, too, must do his struggle of life even more after marriage). So what I must tell you is, I can't come in March, perhaps. But it's a little pity because the aircraft charge of Aero Float is likely to rise from next April, they said.

I have an obsession that I won't be able to come to Europe at all after telling you all about this. This must be an obsession. But this will mean my betrayal to you. I don't hope this sort of disaster at all. By the way have you holidays in March or April? Anyway my desire is one and all: I want to come to you right now.

I'm still not drunk. I wish I were. But that headache caused by hangover the next morning is terrible, I recently knew as my real experience.

As a matter of fact, I don't remember very well what I wrote in pencil on the back of the last page. Women are in general quite emotional and I think it's true. And me, I found myself how stupid and helpless.

Maybe my present anxieties are money, visa, and my physical and mental health. About money, I'm now saving it. I'm glad to hear you're attracted by me, though I'm still in half doubt. For I don't think I have any charm, especially physically. Maybe physically I fear you feel nothing about me. It's quite natural, because I'd seldom been conscious and remember I'm a woman except during menstruation before I met you. Sometimes I even cursed that I was born female. Small breasts have been my constant inferiority complex and obsession for a long time. I'm ashamed to speak like this, but make allowances, because I'm drunk. Unless I'm drunk, it's most improbable I write in this way.

Well, fortunately, I've been a little drunk. Incidentally I heard men tend to hate to use the word 'love', because 'love' robs them of sense of freedom and sometimes will be nuisance. I don't know much about love. But I'm quite faithful to my own feeling, and I can definitely say I like you. But other words I fear to use to express my feeling, because I've not know these things well. Anyway it's a great honour to be liked by you.

But remember although I think I'm serious, I may well forget all what I'm writing now because I'm drinking, so don't mind at all.

Incidentally, my father said the strangest things. He asked me of your height, because a great difference of height between a married couple in general sometimes be a cause of divorce. Can you understand it? I don't think you can. It's queer. He means in sexual intercourse they can't get on well because of their difference of mutual strength. My father, too, is a little nervous and his will is not so strong (this is my own view), but he's really considerate to the family members in his own way. He drinks quite much every night. And our standard of living may be not rich, not poor.

Father is a salaried man and so is my brother. I have granny whom I hate, I'm ashamed to say, because she hasn't nothing particular in her long life of 72, except bearing children, two of them died when they were children. I really wish to live separately from my granny. So tell me the story of your family to some extent, if you've not already done so.

I made one guess: If you feel special feeling toward me only mentally, we can remain to be good friends. I think it's possible, though I've always been wondering if the true friendship between other sexes can be established. If you feel you are feeling something to me just mentally, tell me so. In that case, we won't necessarily have to meet, I mean, the exchange of letters will do. On the second thought, however, it's absurd to separate the mental feeling and physical feeling.□Actually I didn't want to speak about these physical things. I even didn't mean it. But you know, I can never speak like this when I'm sober. But don't come to hate drunken Namiko! It's Saturday night, and I think it's all right. I'm quite enjoying writing this letter. I usually seldom lose mental control in front of others.

But I'm still serious essentially. You can trust me. But can you read my hand writings? I hope you can.

Anyway I'm glad you are not depressed now. These days, there appear a great deal of pimples on my face. I look ugly. When I get worried and stressed, pimples appear on my face.

Yes, it is a wonderful feeling to get drunk. I don't feel quite myself, but I'm still myself.

Oh, now I can't write properly. Only at least I want ...

(This page, I've rewritten this morning.)
I have a terrible headache and feel sick and it seems alcohol is still lingering within my body. Last night, I was drinking whisky straight without water or anything. The last page which I meant to include looks really crazy. I dare not post. Not only for the awful handwriting but for lip marks. I couldn't print properly because of drinks. Anyway the last page is as follows:
... to see you before I die someday. I even can't read well now. I'm so drunk. But anyway I'm happy at this moment and I hope you're happy as well. Yes, I want to be happy in my life. Don't think I'm not serious. At least I'm happy at this moment, though I'm not controlling myself. But I think I can have a wonderful dream this night. So good night, dear Hubert. So I really say good bye now. Write to me whenever you feel like it, though for that matter stamps cost much. Why don't you use thinner paper for the cost consideration.

Namiko

Nov. 12,
1975

Dear Hubert,

I'm thinking various ways and possibilities. As I told you, I've already decided to come to Europe. And now I'm thinking how long I will stay. If my stay would be short, the departure date of Japan will be sooner than in the case of a longer one, because in the former case I can more easily finance money for travel and miscellaneous daily cost. But only a short stay would be even more painful, especially in parting with you, though the pain will perhaps, be all the same, or more in the longer stay. Anyway if I intend to stay more than three months in Germany, for example, I'll need visa. And if it's not a labour ***a labour visa*** (means visa applied for the purpose of working in a foreign country, and in this case, one has to arrange and contract with the company or anywhere to work in beforehand), and if you can support me financially for accommodation and food, you have to submit a letter to the German consulate in Kobe, Japan to assure them that you can certainly support me in such and such period. The form of letter is not be settled, but it would make the visa more easily taken to attach a paper to show how much income one gets monthly. Moreover, you must promise to take responsibility in case of illness, accident and such.
There are some troubles: It's quite unlikely for me to get financial aid from my parents, because they're not in the least willing to give me money for my purpose to live with an European man in one house. So for this reason, it'll take longer before I leave Japan, and I am likely to stress you all the more financially. I think I can get at least money for travel by myself, but you know even if you give me accommodation and food, I'll still need some more money for, for example, cloths, traffic fare, books, daily commodities, etc... You may think I can find work but without labour visa I can't work as a regular worker. All I'll be able to do is side jobs.
Another point is; where to live. I myself want to live in Germany but it's up to you. But I don't want you to quit university for me. But how is it possible to support me if you are a student? But I want you to finish university. But how is it possible ...? It's an endless question.
My parents do not want me to live with an European in Europe. They see so much worries and anxieties in this scheme. But I'm fed up with talking with them. Whenever I talk with them, I get impatient and furious. I'm beginning to hate them. Their attitude and their way of thinking really make me feel depressed and want to die. (But I don't want to die before I see you again!) Even if we should marry, they wouldn't be willing to approve it. For them it's a hardly acceptable idea to live with the other sex without being married. Their idea is totally different from mine. I think I can't accept the marriage without confirming each other's mental and physical love beforehand, though I remember telling you that I won't marry. I said so partly because one can't tell the future and partly because I didn't see the possibility that I could encounter in life a person to marry. About marriage I still don't know how the thing will go on. Still less my child if I can get any.

I've looked over the possibility for you to come to Japan. But I don't want you to spend much money for this. I'd rather see you in Europe. I hate Japan. I hate Kyoto, I hate my ***home***. But this does not mean I won't feel any nostalgia or homesick abroad. You know there's no other place than one's home.

Anyway, the present state of my mind is terribly painful. I'm impatient to see you. Too much length to wait will distort what our feelings are, I think. In my side I feel I'm going crazy if I continue to think of you day and night and still have to wait and wait. What I want to do eagerly is to confirm my feeling toward you directly.

But even if one likes the other very much, if the financial circumstances are hard, it may distort the form of love, if it's love. Besides, after hearing my parents' so many unwilling words, I've got quite discouraged. I mean they impair my mood, though they usually say, "Namiko, we really wish your future happiness."

Anyway, dear Hubert, imagine how I'm feeling and suffering, and I fear you should disappear from my image and vision after thinking too much of you.

So good-bye

Namiko

P.S.
Tell me exactly about your next Easter holidays and summer holidays.

Nov. 15, 1975

Dear Hubert,

It's Saturday. I've received your letters on Saturdays for three times running. It's really a wonderful Saturday present.

I'm not drinking now. I'm ashamed to send you once a letter written in a very drunken mood. Do you remember? I wrote that one late on Saturday night, and the following morning and all through the day, I had a terrible hangover. I had a violent headache and nausea. But as I hate to vomit very much, so I tried not to do, and I could. But usually at night, I'm so easily induced to drink whisky and I usually do so. Drinking is less bad than smoking for me, though I still smoke a little.

I wish you could give me a photo of yours some time, because you may look a little different from what I saw you were in summer in Oxford.

Generally speaking, you know, one looks different or changes one's daily behaviour a little or new phase of one's personality is revealed when one's in a foreign country. So I'm afraid that this is also true of each one of us. Maybe in holidays, you feel freer than usual. But at home you have to be involved in the various daily things. So in case I'm in Holland or Germany, this may happen and I may be discouraged with a reality. But this is only my fancy and imagination and even if it happens, it won't affect my fundamental decision: that is, to come to you and see once more before I die.

I'm ashamed that I'm already told all the things about us to my parents and I've met their disagreement and that I've been in a 'cold war' between them. Maybe I should not have told them, but please don't get angry about this. Simply because they opposed me, I won't change my mind. But a present, I don't speak to them daily much, or at least avoid talking of my plan.

By the way, I think I've told you about visa, but if I stay in Holland for a long time, I'll need visa to Holland. In that case I must make an application for visa at the Dutch consulate. I don't know yet where it's located, but I'll find it. As for the German consulate, I've already obtained an official paper for application for a residence permit from it. So anyway, tell me from which consulate I should get visa. Maybe from Dutch, I think, because I want you to stay at university.

It's true I've told you I would come in March ***at the soonest*** in the earlier letter, but don't stick to March too firmly, because that's my very wish.

Every time I hear from you; I don't force you to come to Europe, I begin to get impatient to go there right now.

By the way did you here from Awatif about her marriage? She wrote to me that she would go to England and France on July 1st to get ***married***.

Especially at night I tend to want to write to you. I'm afraid I've repeated many things in my letters, but it's because I don't remember exactly what I write. But don't mind my repeating things.

How much money do you think I'll need there in a month, apart from food and accommodation and under the condition that I won't be luxurious?

My parents may think it quite reckless for me to go abroad and live in such an uncertain (for their eyes) way. Although often do I refer to my parents, don't mind too much. It doesn't absolutely mean that I can't do anything without their advice. No, it's not true at all. Since I entered the university, I didn't do

anything as they told me or suggested me. I'm in a way a stubborn person, and usually am never content with things after trying them once myself.

Eventually in my life, I want to be independent both financially and mentally of my parents. But it's usually very hard for a woman and even a man to live alone. I don't think there are many jobs in the society which interest me much, and after all one must be content with one's job ***to some degree***. I know it's useless to deplore that the society doesn't accept me. Rather we should try to find the space or place in the society by ourselves in which we can confirm self identity. But anyway I hate the society, though one can't live by all himself. I need a man who will protect me from the society and become a kind of wall from it. You know, even in the crowd, I may feel secured if there's such a person beside me. So again, the space is running out. I'll write to you soon. I've got a slight cold now.

Namiko

P.S.
In Utrecht University, is there any department in which you can study English literature? And in your university, are there many foreign students, including Japanese?

Dear Hubert, good-bye

Namiko

Near 12:00 p.m. Nov. 16, 1975

Dear dear Hubert,

Your letter always encourages my weak mind. You know, my mood is changing almost every moment. At one moment I get quite resolute and feel myself quite strong, bat at another moment I get weak and nervous and worried. Especially seeing others doing their routine with perfect ease, I feel somewhat guilty of my (quite reckless) plan. But anyway this is general speaking.

Suppose I should come to you without a single money, what shall you do? This is a mere supposition and means nothing. I'm just thinking of money. Once, you said money isn't everything, and I think so too. But sometimes without ***enough*** money, one can't be happy. I admit there are many degrees in the word ***enough***; I mean, to be very rich is not my future dream, but frankly, I think after all that the more money, the better. On the other hand, it's often said that the more one has, the more one wants to get. There's no limit in human monetary desire. Anyway, I want to know how much amount of grant you can get from the government monthly. And during the terms do students in Holland or Germany do the side jobs? In Japan many undergraduates are busier in their side jobs than in their study, exaggeratingly speaking.

And I want to ask you how long does it take from Utrecht to Aachen in train or something. And from Frankfurt to Aachen. And what is your idea about marriage in general.

My idea about marriage, (if you want to hear), is not so clear. I remember, I told you, I don't want to marry. I've already said, I don't want to marry, I want to die, to quite a lot of persons so far. Since I told you of my brother's marriage, I hope you can better understand me, but my brother's arranged marriage is very typical of the ordinary Japanese. And because I have long seen this nasty Japanese custom of marriage, I've been fed up with it and this has affected my idea about marriage very much. Some Japanese males, and even females consider that marriage means a grave of life. Many girls of my contemporary seem to want to be a wife and mother. But to my eyes, in their way of living, they seem to forget their very existence as a human being. Maybe if I meet somebody whom I want to spend the rest of my life with, I can marry. But I think it hard to lead an idealistic marriage life. Maybe I'm just thinking too much about marriage in a vague and abstract way before I get nothing started. If you think me your somebody who may be all right to live just one year or so but who may not be a person at all to spend the rest of your life, it's a pity, though I know nobody can tell what happens after one year, nor do I force you to look much further through the future. It's impossible both for you and for me. So marriage is a very difficult thing, I mean it's easy to get married, but it's very difficult ***to be*** married.

So again my brother's story, I don't want to attend his wedding. But it's a very rigid obligation and duty, so I must attend, I can't escape from it. I'll only attend it not for bless or congratulate his marriage, but out of sense of obligation. But it's a great pity for me to feel in this way, it's even unnatural, and inhuman. I have only a brother and I like him and he really lives seriously. My parents speak like this, "Oh, we can't gather more than 25 relatives to attend the wedding!" They always speak of such an unimportant thing as if it □were very important, and once I oppose to them they are sure to answer me back, "But Namiko, this is a

custom. Custom is custom and you can't bend the custom." They even won't change the custom at all. They say, you must do like this because many other people in the society do like this. The more they stick to customs, the more I hate them. Maybe I'll be at the wedding weeping.

Again presumption: Ca you forget me if it happens that I can't come to you at all? Maybe you can't answer. But you know, time makes man forget everything. So this is one reason I'm eager to come to you as soon as possible, though it's never because I can't believe you, never. I can believe you surely, certainly. But human beings are fragile. I am especially weak. But your love if I may call it love, will make me strong. (But dear Hubert, it's still very difficult for me to make me aware that there's you in the world who is thinking of me in such a faraway land.)

So this letter is too abstract, ***tu ne trouves pas?*** (This French I learnt today. I'm still studying French.) Anyway what do you say to meeting you during next summer holiday? In this case, I can arrange everything to come to you without the aid of my parents, because from now till June or July, there remains much more time, and if my stay is short, I may be able to save money during this period. But in this plan, there are two difficulties: one is that I can't wait until summer and the second is that the stay is too short. This plan only gives me financial security and that's all. You know nothing is uglier than the financial conflict. (By the way, as one gets older, one gets uglier. I don't like ugly things nor do I want to get uglier apparently and mentally than now. The age makes man ugly and wither. To think of this is horrible. The society is ugly and dirty, I believe. Human beings are sometimes the greatest enemy.)

Is a larger flat you're looking for the flat for us to live? Apart from the matter of me, you want to find a larger one, aren't you?

Just recently I've found myself quite an idealist compared with others. Japanese males in general are not fond of controversial girls. They seem to rather prefer a gentle one. Anyway I've never had any Japanese boy friend so far. I've never met a Japanese male who accepts me as you do.

I'm a little tired with thinking of you because I've thought of you too much, already. But I cannot stop thinking of you.

Namiko

Morning, Nov. 17, 1975

I was about to go to the post office, when I received your letter.

Though I wrote in the previous pages about the summer holiday plan, it just came to my mind and it's only one possibility. Moreover I've never thought you are thinking of marriage in that way. I mean I've been thinking the marriage is the thing of the very far future. But as for actual marriage, I think we don't have to be hasty in drawing a conclusion. And anyway I'm so glad that you are thinking of me so earnestly as to think me as your would be wife.

I heard that in Europe many married women are working. Isn't there any full time housewife? If married women work, is that because they can't live only with their husbands' income? In Japan it's so. Housewives work mostly in order to

support their earning. Anyway I'm not unwilling to work in some way, but at the same time, I want to study in some way. By study I mean, I want to put myself in a circumstance in which I can read some books and have some contact with a sort of academic atmosphere. But I don't mean actual university or institution. Maybe it'll be a little pain for me to lose the opportunity of reading in my daily life. But anyway what is most important for me is the life itself. So I conclude this letter and tell you my love to you.

Namiko

P.S.
Your letter this time really encourages me. Because I was worrying a lot about visa. I'll apply to the Dutch consulate for this matter of visa.

11:00 P.M. Nov. 17, 1975

Dearest Hubert,

I count the day on which you said you want to marry me the happiest that I've ever had in my life. I've never thought 'you want to marry me' has given me such an extreme sense of happiness. And these your words have brought me the greatest feeling of relief. I don't know why. But before you said so, there had been always somewhere in my mind something which had made me feel somewhat guilty of just living with you. I'm extremely thankful of your utmost seriousness and sincerity. But I'm ashamed that whereas you have such a broad, generous and tender heart toward me, I have so little which I can give you. I have been so selfish and had my own way egoistically in my life. All I can say and do now is I love you, though my love is so uncertain before I see you actually, nor can I say I can love you all my life. And I also apprehend that when we come to know each other more, many of my defects will be revealed and I'll find myself unworthy of you. Further, it may be a kind of risk for you to say you want to marry me before you know me much more. Maybe you are right in saying that in a letter we can speak more freely, but at the same time I've always been thinking that in letters one tends to deceive oneself and write only the safe things. Maybe I may not be what you think I am. Besides, one of my cousins who got married months ago once said, her husband is quite an another person from what she knew he was before she got married. What she means is that, before they got married, her husband perhaps did not expose what really he was in front of his future wife, though my cousin seems to lead quite a happy marriage life. Maybe this is a too personal matter, and you may wonder why others should know about their marriage life in detail. Anyway their marriage was again the arranged marriage, and even during their association period, a trivial news, such as they were going to have rendezvous on such and such day, quite frequently came to us relatives' ears. ... Sorry, I've digressed quite a lot. Anyway about our marriage I'll think it over, taking time.

Maybe I've wrote so many unnecessary worries and obsessions in the previous letters but I really hope you've not taken offence. If you have even once, tell me so. Do you feel rather comical to see me get easily upset and almost wailing out at every word of yours? But I really appreciate your patient attitude to answer my every stupid question.

Afternoon, 18th November

Last night in my sleep you were always there and I'm not sure if I really slept or not. Maybe I did.

I've just phoned the Dutch consulate in Kobe to ask something about visa. They said they couldn't talk about the visa for marriage purpose just on the telephone, as it's procedure is a little complicated and they asked me to come to the consulate. So I'll go there next Tuesday. When I told them on the phone that whether I'll really marry or not has not been settled yet, then they said, "Well, well, well, come anyway. "My father once suggested that if I won't act properly that is, I'll look so sullen and unsociable at the wedding of my brothers, he'd rather want me not to attend. I'd rather prefer not to attend it, but if I won't, I'm sure they,

especially the bride's relatives will accuse me of this all my life. This idea may be an obsession, but it is very likely, even if they don't directly blame me.

Anyway, on March 31 there will be a plane service to Frankfurt of the Aeroflot (Soviet plane) and in Frankfort, I'll change the plane to Amsterdam. This is a plan and I've not yet completely decided. As I told you before, the Aeroflot plane is the cheapest, though I'd rather like to fly straight to Amsterdam. Maybe from April, the aircraft charge will be raised, so at present this date seems to be the best date of my departure. But after all this is yet only a plan.

Night, 18th

Incidentally there's one thing which I've wanted to ask you: don't you have to go to the military service? I've heard in Germany there's such a system. But you said you're officially Dutch. So I wonder which.

As for marriage, what happens to my nationality when I get married with you? But honestly, are really thinking of it as a reality? And what legal advantages are there compared with the case of living together without marrying?

Do I want to marry you? I'm not sure. I can't answer. But if I should have to say yes, or no alternatively, maybe yes, as a feeling. I still don't see how far you're earnest in this point.

At the moment, your ***words*** 'I want to marry you' is enough just to remind and repeat these words, over and over again in my mind. I feel happy. In general I'm inclined to associate a sense of restriction with marriage. In any case, apart from legal marriage, I'm willing to accept ***substantial marriage*** with you, anyway. But isn't it convenient in various points for you to marry an European, if you marry legally? I'm afraid I think so. Moreover I think in this way: if I get married and settle myself in Europe, it'll cost every time a great deal of money to return to Japan in case of emergency. I ***de nouveau (?)*** regret how far Japan is situated from Europe, while I think I may be able to spend, say 10 or 20 years in Europe, I mean I may be able to manage the life there mentally if I start now. But no one can tell how many more years one will live. I may lose Japan, my home, my parents, my brother simply because I was born in Japan and I happen to share blood with them. But I still don't know how far I'm Japanese in consciousness and how much I'm devoted to it.

Generally speaking, many adults including my parents (I'm so sorry so often do I refer to my parents stupidly), think an international marriage is more difficult than an ordinary one. Maybe there are many cases in which sooner or later at the end, internationally married couples are subject to divorce. If one in demanded why he or she so wants to marry, I don't think there are many who can answer clearly. I think it's better for people to divorce when they find their marriage unsatisfactory to some degrees and when they think to continue their marriage won't bring them any fruitful result.

Anyway all those things about marriage and things about after 10 or 20 years are still my fancy and illusion. I know it's meaningless to worry too much about our far distant future. Nevertheless sometimes I cannot help thinking in this way. How about you?

Before I met you, and somewhat even now I've been advocating a marriage living separately, because I thought and think that if a couple sees each

other all the time, they'll soon get tired of each other. Even for a couple who loves each other passionately, there may come a period of ennui.

By the way when is your birthday? Have you already got 26? You know mine. Christmas Eve. So I'll be soon 23. Not so old but no so young either. ***Souvent*** I have cursed myself, I've wasted more than 20 years! I wonder if I've done something meaningful or important in my life. After living more than 20 years, I'm still weak and not yet independent in every sense, whereas most animals can stand on their feet soon after there are born. What a difference! Maybe this comparison is not that appropriate. Anyway I can't deny the fact that there still remains somewhere in my mind a wish to continue to be a child. Maybe one can't be a child forever, nor can he be a student forever.

My mother is getting so sad at the prospect of my leaving her for such a long time and living in such a distant place. She said she didn't mind my living separately somewhere in Japan, but Europe is too far away for her to stand. But I managed to persuade and console her by saying I'll return after one year (it may be true or not) and I'll write to her so often.

Morning 19th (raining)

So dear Hubert, I conclude here now.
I must go to school now.

My love to you

Namiko

So dear Hubert, I conclude

Afternoon till Evening, 22nd, November 1975

Dear Hubert,

Please for Heaven's sake forgive me to have written you such ***a complicated*** letter (11th written) which made you so sad. And also my careless words I wrote in one of my letters that I was tired of thinking of you. I regret saying it so much that I have an impulse to fly up to you right now and apologize you. The fact is the more I think of you, the more I feel it painful to be separated from you as now, and I'm even haunted by the groundless fear that you really don't exist. (Again please don't get angry with this remark.)

Since you are such a generous person that all the time I'm tempted to tell everything I feel at every moment and I always yield to that temptation and tell you everything which may make me you sad or impair your feeling. I know what I've already mentioned is irrecoverable, I mean my stupid remark. But I honestly tell you that your letter always has such a miraculous power upon me as makes me think everything is possible. But anyway, I admire your will with which you can wait another eight months! Oh, it's impossible for me. Even four months are too long. I don't think I can wait, but I know I must manage to wait. You said time passes away quickly. It may be true when you turns back at the past. But you can imagine everyday is full of bitterness before I meet you. But I should not deplore any more. Yes, maybe the hope and the sense of anticipation of joy in the very near future will make me happy. So dear Hubert, from now on I'll try to look forward to the future and try to get my will strong.

Recently I think my parents have been convinced that I will live for a year (at least) in Europe. They seem to be quite determined, because they realized however strongly they may oppose, I've already firmly decided and, whatever they say, I will fly up to you sooner or later, anyway. So my relation with my parents is not bad at the moment; (I'm again ashamed to confess you all about these things before.) So I asked them to give me some money for the complement for my living abroad, telling them that even if I remain home and continue to live with them as I have done, they'll support me mainly in food and other daily needs because , as far as I'm at home, I'll have no intention to pay them for food from the money I'll earn). Also I persuaded them: please don't regard my plan as a frivolous one, but as a sort of study of life in a foreign country. And I'm actually thinking so: the study which I study in school or in university is not the only study. They are beginning to understand me to the better degree. But I think that I'll come home after a year, as an excuse to console my mother. Maybe no one can tell what will happen after a year. Maybe I stay longer or maybe not. Or on the contrary I may leave Europe before the year is over. But anyway, what I'm thinking in my mind is that I want to penetrate the life abroad at least for a year, overcoming the possible difficulties. You mentioned the plan of our meeting in the next summer holidays. But I now don't think that I can part with you after three months. (Oh, I'm already worrying about the bitterness of parting with you before I meet you!)

So I'll go up to you in April. I, a couple of days ago, found that there's a direct plane to Amsterdam on April 4. But they said that there is a possibility that the date will change after April. But anyway, there's a direct flight to Amsterdam in the Aeroflot company once a week, so I want to choose one of the earliest of April. So I'll let you know when I book the ticket. As for the money to buy the ticket, I think I can save that amount by myself at least for one way ticket until the

spring. So again I tell you I'll go up to you in April. And even if I can't get a visa, I'm going to you. If you're a little engaged in university, I want to be with you; it's better for me to spend three months (even if I'm given only that) from April with you) than to wait until the next summer and then leave you.

I feel so sorry that by the time this letter reaches you, you must worry about these matters. But as it seems it takes less than five days to reach from Japan to Holland (is this right?), I'm quite glad. On the das I get your letter, I'm always full of happiness and I can't resist smiling all day!

Your existence is quite akin to a kind of faith. At the moment, I don't need God (though I slightly want Him to exist sometimes and secure me). You can take the place of God (may be I don't think you can understand this sentence) not in the sense that you're almighty and perfect, but in the sense that the prospect of you make my daily life secured, meaningful.

Generally many Japanese girls seek tenderness in their future lovers: for example, when asked what type of man they like, they are likely to answer, 'I like a tender man'. But strange thing is that they seem to point out the general vision of men first. I wonder if they don't mind if their lovers are tender to other girls as well. This may be a red herring, but what I want to say is that I feel it enough if my lover is tender only to me. And how happy I feel to think that you're exclusively thinking of me at least at the moment. I believe so. I really can believe in you. and you can also believe me. My love to you really changed the whole spiritual life of mine; I've never expected love brings such a wonderful bliss in my mind.
Compared to the previous page, this page may seem to be a little abrupt, but again I write something about the society. I have no confidence in getting on well with the society. I easily get tired physically and mentally in working in the society, though precisely speaking, I'm not working in the society, of which evidence is that I'm not paying the tax yet. Generally speaking for many people their job and their hobby are not always related to each other. Maybe one can't live only by doing what one likes, he must sometimes do what he doesn't like for earning his living. But dear Hubert, don't you feel sometimes disgusted with the society?
I feel sorry for men who must do the job which they don't like in order to support their family. Not only men but women must work sometimes. Oh, what I'm speaking? What I want so say is while I despise a full time housewife, I find it too hard to work in the society in Japan or anywhere. You once mentioned the struggle for life. I sense this is a good word. But I'm ashamed of what I've been doing so far in my life. It's true that for more than seven years I've been continuously studying quite hard but what I've studied has no practical use. I fear that I'll be a failure of life. Or perhaps I am already a failure of life. T be a failure or otherwise is a relative thing, not absolute thing. but anyway it's hardly impossible for me to be content with the present situation at any time. Maybe one calls me too idealistic. I'm sort of arrogant and sometimes look dawn upon others, while I'm constantly losing confidence in various matters and hold inferiority complex.

Anyway, the more I speak of these meaningless things, I'm afraid the more you'll be bored and tired of me. But I always hope that you won't deceive your own feelings and never hesitate to tell even the unfavourable opinion toward me. And I entreat you not to take offence whatever I write to you, as best as you can. Whatever I may write, it's due to my disposition to think and worry too much. So at any rate, my fundamental mind will not change about our matter.

I know I'm not at all reasonable at any time, while you're always reasonable. I really was amazed when you said you can wait another 8 months. I've

been thinking myself quite strong in my will, but I found that in this case of love, my will is almost next to weakness. There're other things I can get patient and steady, for example, study. So your remark that you can wait that long really revealed me your firmness of mind and endless sincerity, and made me so much at ease, and I'm thankful to you from the bottom of my heart.

Incidentally, have you still an intention to be a teacher? Or have you any other idea about your future vocation? I feel like knowing what you're thinking about the matter.

And since I think my English may not be completely understandable for you, and many of my sentences are so untidy, I'm a little bit afraid that there is sometimes a small misunderstanding between us. For example I don't think that I've asked you to tell something about our affair to your parents. This is not an important matter, but are you referring to the letter which I once suggested in getting the visa? But as for visa, I'll tell you something next time.

So coming to the end of this letter, I tell you my deepest love.

Namiko

27, November, 1975

Dear Hubert,

Thank you for your letter in which you suggested two possible ways: our meeting on summer holidays and our marriage. But please don't get angry when I say that I can't choose either of them. Maybe it's I that have made the things too complicated, first.

I'm thinking like this: I shall go to Europe next April with some amount of money which I may need during my stay. And during my stay, I'll draw some conclusion or other about marriage, though I'm not sure I'll draw any conclusion. (You know I always hesitate quite a lot before doing things.) And even if I can't get visa from Holland, I can go and stay in Holland for three months, and then comes summer vacation when we can get out of Holland, and then maybe after the vacation we can come back to Holland, even if I don't have visa and will be able to stay another three months in Holland. It makes 9 months in all.

You may be right, but please understand, for me how harsh both of the possibilities you suggested are.

So about visa: I went to the officer of the Dutch consulate. They told me to ask you a letter in which you have to write that you will:
1) support me in food and accommodation (as for other expenses, I'll have my parents write a letter to guarantee the financial aids), and
2) our wish to marry in the future ('our' may be for convenience sake) and lastly you have to
3) declare yourself responsible for me in illness, accident and so on. This is an official letter. And if you can, please typewrite it <u>in English</u>: if typewriting is not available, please write it as clearly as possible. With your letter, I'll submit my parents letter to the Dutch consulate. Your letter can be written in the form of statement, but the more convincing the content is, the better, so they said. There's no <u>fixed form</u> in writing this letter in this case.

At the moment, here in Japan, there are large scale national railway strike and the mails are reported to be delayed in delivering. So will you please write it as soon as possible? Because of this strike, I'm getting anxious about other letters of yours will be late to reach me. Every time I see the postman, I think of your letter. Today in the morning I saw a postman on the street about 50 metres from my house, then I wished he would come and stop a my house, and then waited a couple of minutes, and he came. I was so happy.

So, dear Hubert, as I've said, I want to go to Europe in April whether I can get visa or not.

And I'm very glad to hear that you're beginning to like your university. During the term, you will be busy, so I'm a little afraid that I should disturb your study, though I don't mind if you can't totally concentrate on me.

28th Nov. 1975

Today I got your other letter. About marriage, I can't decide yes or no at this moment, however convenient getting married may seem in our case; you know, we've just spend only three weeks together, and it seems to me to be quite hard to decide about such a serious matter as marriage. So I'll need some more time.

And as for nationality, I heard that it is not wise for me to abandon my nationality as Japanese from the view point of my future. And I can't have both nationalities, though officially it's not absolutely impossible but the procedure will be too complicated.

So I want to ask you if I can also still get the grant after I get married with you without losing my Japanese nationality. And about grant, I asked something to a staff of the Dutch consulate in Kobe, but he doesn't know about such system. He said, "Is there such a system as grant? Isn't that the scholarship or something like that?" But apart from his remark, can you get grant because you're a student? Then in my case can I get grant because I get married but have no income?

About marriage I still don't know what to do. Though you mentioned that even if you get married, you'll be as free as before. For me, the idea about marriage seems so abrupt and it will be something like a bet, to decide to marry you at this moment, though you've never said let's marry right now. So do you think it's O.K. to decide some time after we meet? Isn't it too late for official procedure?

So please write the official letter which I mentioned earlier in this letter and enclose that letter in your next letter to me. However in writing that one, if you can't guarantee food and accommodation completely, tell me so then, and I'll ask my parents about that. ***It's quite urgent***. The sooner, the better. But as I told you, I want to get to you without getting visa anyway. I'm impatient to see you. You may say that after passing such difficulties, we'll have a beautiful future, but you know, it's very dangerous to expect too much in the future, because when you're betrayed by the reality, your disappointment will be the greater. So I want to see you as soon as possible. I'm afraid you may hold an illusion about me to some extent and so do I, maybe.

At the moment, I feel a little melancholic, maybe because everything is not settled yet. I'll have Cambridge exam on Dec. 10, 11, 12. It makes me a little strained. And it's getting quite cold these days and the cold makes not only my body but my heart lonely and depressing. But anyway, I'll try to get strong and manage the present circumstances.

So good-bye, dear Hubert.

Namiko

29th Nov., 1975

Dear Hubert,

I hope you're well and happy.
Me, I'm not too bad, but my mood is not so steady. Whatever I see, say, in walking along the street seems very beautiful (I mean the seasonal nature and the various objects around me) and I'm inclined to strangely moved by them, though sometimes I feel somewhat lonely. Have you known the idea that for the person whose death is approaching, everything looks too beautiful. But I'm not a person who's decisively going to die in the very close future. By maybe in several months, I'll leave Japan, so it may makes me feel in this way. But it's not true that I feel it painful to be separated from this too familiar sight. It's just a sentiment. And it's thanks to you and your existence that made me restore what I call, my lost, or forgotten, inclination to feel the things as they are, in other words, to instil my inner feelings into the outer objects.

You may say that whatever nationality one may have, it doesn't matter. But I think for many people, it quite usually happens that it's almost impossible to completely abandon a kind of attachment to one's country. It's an answerable feeling, even if one hates one's own country in some way. But all these are general assumptions and don't matter. I've just mentioned that.

Again about marriage; you seem to think marriage is an official act and it will give us financial support. I can quite well understand what you say. But at the same time, honestly, I think it a little difficult for me to accept your too ***rational*** way of thinking. You may say it's very ***natural*** an idea for you, though. But again it's not a real worry but a consideration, though sometimes for me consideration and worry are almost identical.

And you mentioned in your last letter that it doesn't matter much whether for your part you're married or not. That statement made me ***only a little*** uneasy. For me, I must confess, the idea of marriage, whether it'll happen actually or not, so, ***so*** sweet, but being drowned forever in this sweetness might be a little dangerous, because marriage is not after all a ***housekeeping play*** but a reality, which may sometimes involve ugliness.

As I told you in my last letters, that I hate and fear ugliness in general. And as far as I'm separated from you geographically, you won't know ***the ugly part of mine*** which I think I have in me. (These words may be too abstract. They don't refer to actual things but in a sensual sense.)
I would be able to feel so romantic and sweet with your image if I do not see you actually forever. That would be quite all right and nice and remain as one of the most beautiful memories of my life. But fortunately or unfortunately, I couldn't, and you couldn't either, choose that way. I can't definitely die before I don't see you even only once. I ***have to*** (doesn't mean obligation) see you. But this realization of my wish should break all ***our*** (if you have) beautiful dreams in a moment, I fear. In life it's more frequent for us to be disillusioned by the reality than to remain in a realm of dream. So it's not so unreasonable not to expect too much in the future beforehand, and draw a rosy picture in our mind, apart from our natural anticipation of the future. And don't forget I'm a whimsical person and my mood changes badly every moment, so I warn you beforehand about this disposition of mine lest you should be disillusioned. But I have always been thinking that a true ***friend*** (this word may not be appropriate in this context) is a

person whose very existence makes you full of joy, therefore even his or her silence is more than acceptable.

It just came to my mind, I suppose you have a sort of longing for your own home, I mean the home in the future, because you said you've been independent of your parents and family for some years. I'm just opposite: as I have been with my family for whole of my life, I'm quite fed up with it apart from security. And in Oxford you said maybe for a joke that you want your own children. It's still true, though how my thinking will change in the future is not known, I'm still whole unsure of myself and I'm not so constructive as to wish children.

Today I happened to know a case of a kind of newspaper scandalous article: a Japanese man with some fluency in French came to Paris and seduced and deceived quite a few Parisiennes and one of those Parisiennes fell really in love with him and they came back to Japan together, but that man, after settling in Japan, found it very different to see her here in Japan from to see her there in Paris. In short, he was disillusioned. And so they had violent quarrels and after two months they got separated. This story still continues and it's the petty man and he is in prison now for the crime of violence toward that Parisienne and others. But anyway this case is a case and we have nothing to do with this. But simply it made me a little bit associate with our case. Though I believe we know better than that.

So I hope this letter does not bore you. Still I'm thinking quite a lot about something I don't know clearly. And sometimes I wonder if I'm too childish or too timid in my way of thinking. But anyway, however complicated and confused my thoughts may be, I hope and believe the substantial nature of our love is just simple, and yet strong.

Namiko

December 2, 1975

Dear Hubert,

Thank you for your letter. I'll give you my dates for our accommodation purpose:

Name: NAMIKO SUGIURA

Place of Birth: KYOTO (JAPAN)

Date of Birth: December 24, 1952

Address: TAKAKURA DORI, HANAYACHO AGARU,
SHIMOKYO KU, KYOTO, 600

JAPAN

Profession:
A part time teacher of English at Notre Dame Girls' Senior High School in Kyoto;
until March, 1976

This information may be nonsense, because I contracted for one year and after March 31, I'll definitely quit Notre Dame.

Are these enough?

As I told you in my last letter that to get visa, I'll have to present the official papers in which forms I must fill my name, address and so forth. Among these blanks, there's such item as:
"***What is the purpose of your journey?"***
"***Duration of stay."***

For "the purpose", I write 'marriage'. Is that right? And as for "Duration", I don't know what to write. 'A year' is all right? If we are getting married, should I write 'forever'? I don't think so. And I wonder why they 'journey'. I imagine even if we get married, if I remain Japanese (this is most likely), I will be after all almost the same as long staying traveller. And there's another item in this official form, that is ***"What will your means of subsistence be?"*** About this item, I'm not quite sure how to write. Maybe this has something to do with our marriage. If we get married, you said I can get the grant. If not, you will support me in food and accommodation, won't you? Anyway, as I told you, it's possible for me to ask my parents to give some financial support.

So I hope by the time this letter reaches you, I'll have received your next letter with your letter for guaranteeing me. ***Or should I write:*** "I'll get married and get the grant from the Dutch government"?

And about marriage, I'm sorry but I've already told the Japanese staff at the Dutch consulate that our marriage is not get absolutely sure. I shouldn't have told him about that, but then I didn't know at all about the way of getting visa. Maybe that doesn't matter much, because who admits the visa is not him but the

Dutch government, and practically officially, I'm not yet submitted the papers. Maybe I'll submit them with your letter to them and my parent's letter to them. I want to submit before December 18. Because it may take about four months for the visa to be delivered. (How long it will take varies with a person I ask.)

And by the way, I booked the aircraft ticket. I'll leave Japan at 14:25 p.m. on April 18, and I'll arrive at Amsterdam Airport at ***21:35 p.m.*** (Europe time) ***on April 18***. I wonder if there's still train at that late hour of the day to Utrecht. (How long will it take from Amsterdam airport to the station?)

As for the return ticket, in the case of the Aeroflot company, the cost doesn't exactly double: it's quite cheaper by about 92. So I'm wondering if I should buy the return ticket, it will be valid just as long as the ticket for coming. So the disadvantage of buying the return ticket is that I'll absolutely have to return after a year, otherwise the ticket will be invalid. And the advantage of buying that is that it's economical and I can return to Japan whenever I want within a year. So I'll think about that. By the way, the difference of cost between Royal Dutch Airlines may be quite great. Maybe about 167, or so.

And I again confirm you if I marry you am I sure to get the grant from the government, though I remain Japanese, and you've not registered there in Holland?

So you gave me that strange title, 'your official future wife'! I know what you mean on the one hand, but are you really sure of what you're doing? Anyway I hope you'll have good luck in your examinations and that arranging our accommodation won't take much of your time and won't disturb your study very much. Even if it's like a business letter, I was happy to receive YOUR letter.

So I say good-bye to you.

My love to you

Namiko

Dec. 9, 1975

Dear Hubert,

I hope you're fine. I guess you're now busy in your exams, but as I've not received your letter with the letter which I asked you to write on Nov. 28 or so, I got a little worried. So if you've not yet written that, please write it at once and send it at once.

There's no official paper which the Dutch consulate in Japan concerning marriage purpose. I confirmed it. ***Your letter*** to the Dutch consulate, in which you've got to write:

1) your wish to marry me
2) financial assurance to your capacity and
3) declaration of yourself responsible for me (in other words, a declaration of you being my reference)

must come first. So, please send me this letter if you have not yet done so.

And for emergency, tell me your telephone number, though I wonder if you can give me that as you're living in a flat. But anyway, since I won't call you up except in a really very hurry, please let me know the number.

Honestly when I don't get your letter quite a while, I feel lonely and discouraged a little bit. So whatever brief one, I entreat you to give me.

There's one question which I forgot whether I've already asked you: Even if you don't register yourself in Holland, can you get grant from the Dutch government, still more
me?

When will your exams end? Tomorrow I have Cambridge exams. I'm now a little nervous. Actually for three days till yesterday, I had felt quite ill. My stomach was upset and had a fever slightly. When I don't feel quite well, my mental strength gets very weakened. But now at the moment, I've quite recovered and feel good. So I hope you're well and again I beg you to write to me oftener, because your letters are the sources of my delight and encouragement.

With best wishes

Namiko

Dec. 12, 1975

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your two letters. As they came to me on the days of my Cambridge exams, I couldn't answer them right now.

Well, now, I'm very happy because the exams were over, though those exams made me quite tired. I had two three hour papers, one reading comprehension paper oral, and aural exams. It sounds quite a lot, doesn't it?

And again I have something more to ask you:
Firstly something about your military service: You mentioned a soldier's wife is well financed by the government, but what will a soldier's life be like! Does he leave his home quite a long time utterly! Or does he commute to the military base like an ordinary salaried man? If he has to live separately from home, then your volunteering it right now would not all the more make sense, because if I can not be all the time close to you, my coming to Europe will be meaningless. But anyway, as I've repeated over and over again already, I want absolutely you to stay at university in any case. I feel that your volunteering right now to the military service may equal to my daring to decide to marry you right now in the sense that both of them are a kind of ***bet*** in life, you might abandon university believing or depending upon an unknown factor in our marriage; the day might come later when you will come to feel that such a thing should not have been worth doing while.

Although you asked me if I want to marry or not, I'm sorry, but I still can't answer to that question right now. If I dare to answer, it's Yes and No. But even if I say now Yes, I can't marry before we see each other, naturally. So it's the matter of ***when*** I say yes, or no. Besides as I told you in one of my previous letters that I'll get to Europe with some amount of money with which I shall live for the time being and during the early days, I'll be as fast as I can to draw a conclusion about marriage. Maybe you're right in stating that marriage can just make us financially safe, but I don't see much sense in marrying without any ***vision with a certain length to the future*** (do you understand this?). I mean that if it's already known beforehand that it will be quite probable for our married life to be quite fragile, I think it'll be no use marring just to get money to live on. It may happen that it turns out that both of us have entertained an ***illusion*** to each other, which is one of my greatest fears.

As for accommodation and food, although you mentioned in your very fist letter of suggestion that you can assure them, but as you also said that a big flat is quite expensive, is it impossible for you to pay for that bigger flat until we get married? I heard, however, that sharing food would be economical.

About university: I wouldn't mind much if I won't be allowed to enter your university, because I don't have much longing for an university life. I only want some situation in which I could study somehow. And the matter of entering university is concerned with what I'm going to do in the future, though, as I've already said, I'm not yet sure what I want to do in the future. One thing which I hardly want to do will be a full time housewife in any case. Maybe I'll have to work. I'll write a letter to Amsterdam sooner or later. (By the way, the address is "Japans Consulaat, Keizersgracht, Amsterdam" Is this right and is this all?)

You may think me quite unreasonable, but I fear that to work abroad will be quite hard. And I'm afraid with the immigration visa, they wouldn't hire me as a regular employee. Anyway, I think that maybe I'll have to do side jobs sometimes.

If we get married, when shall we get allowances? I mean how long approximately will the official procedure take until we get them? For some time after I arrive there, including the case in which I shall rent a room, can't you manage the accommodation cost only with your grant? It's likely, but I'd just like to confirm that. For my part, I can't bring more than $ 1.500, because the government controls. So perhaps I must decide on our marriage before that amount of money is spent out.

I wasn't much surprised to hear from you that your parents opposed to our affair, because I guess they are full of what they call common senses. But there is one thing which I'm a little bit worrying about and that is the following: Do they oppose ***partly*** because I'm a Japanese? - Do they in some way stick to my nationality or do they entertain some prejudice to Japan or Japanese in general? But anyway I'd let them know that I have no intension to disturb or give disadvantage to the future of their son.

As to your university, are you to finish it in June, '78, if everything will go alright?

Frankly I see more disadvantages than advantages in our carrying out our plan, as the adults may see. Maybe they are not disadvantages, but at least there are so many difficulties. And I've had already a very pessimistic idea about the result, though the result may depend on how much we shall make an effort. But since even if I remain in Japan, I'll have to look for a job or do something anyway, coming to Europe may do me much good and I hope this event will help me oriented in my future life somehow. If I say that now I have no hesitation or fear in this plan, it will be a lie, how many times you may tell me don't worry. And I hope, as the day of departure approaches, I'll get more decisive and realistic.

So have you any idea how I can spend $ 1.500 and how long it will last on the condition that I won't spend much and be quite thrifty? Maybe it's hard to answer, but for example, if I must rent a room, how much does it cost approximately a month?

You mentioned in one of your letters that you get the grant which amounts to ***7.500*** a year, but what's the currency? It's not ***pound***, is it. (Excuse me for this stupid question.)

Am I not yet realistic? I'm not sure of myself. But I still wonder if I don't need worrying much about the money once we get married. Is marriage so easy in solving the monetary things?

You may say that you'll be as free as when you would remain single, but haven't you ever thought of ***the unconscious, psychological sense of pressure*** caused by marriage? I'm not sure of this point myself, either, but once we get married, we won't be completely change into 'another person'! Do we? But after all every one is a solitary existence. And I've heard many young Americans get easily married, easily divorced.

Well, I must end here, because I have to go tutor this evening.
It's getting quite cold nowadays. Autumn has long away gone. I hope you have good luck in your exams, but don't forget to write to me. Your letters have roughly two kinds; I really love your letters in which you can be a little romantic, or at least not speaking of reality. But never mind! Reality is necessity.

Namiko

Midnight, December 18, 1975

Dear Hubert,

I hope that everything is going well with you now. A few days ago, I submitted the official papers plus your letter and my parents' letter to the Dutch consulate for getting visa. The staff at the consulate said that as soon as they get an answer, they'll tell. I'm not sure how long it'll take exactly, but I hope everything will work out.

I must tell you that I have one vague fear, as a matter of fact; I fear that as the day passes, your memory is getting fainter and fainter in my mind. You once mentioned that you don't want to forget me, but you want to keep me in your mind. That's the same as me; I want to keep you in my mind, and I think I have been doing so because I wanted to do so since I came back from Europe in August. Nevertheless, I feel such a fear in my mind. It may be partly because I'm clinging to your memory of that short summer days. You may say that we can see each other after 4 months and I know the day is approaching day by day. But I'm almost afraid that by the time we shall have seen each other, I'll get empty or changed in something I'm not sure. I think our love has not yet started in a true sense: maybe it's just starting.

But, when I read your letter over and over again, I think I can come to understand you better, at least your opinion about marriage, though I don't understand it completely yet. In short, you think of marriage from a very ***free*** point of view. I'm ashamed to say that I don't have yet a very good idea about marriage. One thing which is sure is that I'm absolutely opposed to the conventional marriage which I've been seeing here in Japan. But the conventional marriage brings about ***stability***. I forget whether I've already told you, but on the one hand I detest stability, but on the other, my nature, and probably almost everyone's nature as well, seems to seek ***a certain degree*** of stability in life. To take my brother's fiancée, for example (if you don't get bored), I can imagine her life of 5 years after; maybe they'll have a very stabilized home and maybe have children, and she'll be devoted all herself to the domestic affairs, her husband and children, in a word, ***a home***. But when I think of my future after 5 years, nothing is clear, even whether I shall still live or not, I mean, whether I'll have decided to continue to live. Borrowing your words, it's "a puzzle of life" and it can be also called "an unknown quantity of life."

By the way, I bought a book for learning Dutch. I've just started reading it. And I found it very interesting and strange to spell "ijs", meaning "ice" and pronounced "eis". And words like "sneeuw" ("snow") and "leeuw" ("lion") are really very funny. Do you by now well understand Dutch? Can you write it freely? As I decided to start studying Dutch, give me some advice if you have any! Incidentally why are you Dutch? I mean both or one of your parents are Dutch?

Since the Cambridge exams were over, I have been ***drained*** in my mind in some way. It's Christmas season, isn't it. I received a pretty Christmas card from Awatif. She seems to be quite happy. And do you remember Miss Yamazaki who had an American accent and who was in the same class as you in Oxford. During her stay there, she was very much worrying about her mother who was very ill for cancer or something. When she phoned to Japan on Aug. 6, her brother replied their mother's life would only last for a month, but unfortunately, she died on ***August 8***. Miss Yamazaki returned to Japan on Aug. 17 without knowing about her

mother's death. I felt really sorry for her in hearing from her just recently. I saw her look very lonely and sad on the plane back to Japan. But now she said she's recovered the peace as before because her father get married again. So I don't want you to have a ***lonely*** Christmas. Enjoy your Christmas holidays!

With my love to you.

Namiko

Dec. 22, 1975

Dear Hubert,

I wish it were not winter. Winter and cold increases the sense of loneliness. Right now I feel a little depressed. I know it's not so good to write to you in such a temper, because the letter written in such a temper might make you feel sad as well. I sincerely hope that you are not feeling lonely and desolate very much.

Even since I decided to go to Holland, what people are doing around me come to seem to have nothing to do with me. They're quite busy in their daily affairs. In short I feel a little alienated from the world around me. You may not understand me if I say that I feel a kind of ***guilty*** in going to Holland in this way. I don't exactly mean the moralistic thing. And I even don't know of what I feel guilty. If I don't get money from my parents for this purpose, I think this sense of guilt will be less. I'm no less unsure of what will become of my future than my parents. Their sense of anxiety infects me, though I know it's me who decides what to do in my life. If it's quite clear what I really want to do in the future, then the form of life will be conformed to that aim. As I told you several times, I'm not sure what I want to do in the future or what form of life I want to take. Perhaps I should recognize first of all what I ***can*** do, which I'm afraid, must be very few.

I am a sort of ***sterile*** person at least mentally. Quite a few women wish to have children instinctively. This suggests they believe in the source of life itself. When they have their own children, they naturally take care of them as a part of themselves, and in a sense they're creative, or at least existentialistic. I don't have such instinct. For years I have been thinking of my own children. And I always ended up by being negative. I'm not particularly talking of children; I'm just feeling sorry to imagine that you'll find me someday how nihilistic and sterile. What can you expect in a nihilistic person? Maybe I should not speak of these things, but I think it'll be worse to pretend to be quite innocent.

However I sometimes find it quite useless to apply the ready made word, "nihilistic" to me. I am what I am and that'll be all. And when you told me that you accept my whole personality as I am, I was, and still am, really glad.

I'm ashamed that quite often I tend to make a stupid generalisation of everything and imprudent argument, depended upon a fixed conception.

I'm very sorry, but I've not yet written to the Japanese consulate in Amsterdam, because I'm still thinking of what and how to write and apart from that I think there's still time enough.

It's morning. My mind is quite fresh at this moment. And don't say that this letter is full of sadness.

I wish I got a letter today, because I was eager to get one in a few days.

By the way, what kind of a city is Utrecht? I happened to see a picture of Utrecht. Curiously enough, I cannot help but imagine Utrecht is not ***too modern*** a city. But is it a city anyway?

My brother is coming home for the new year holidays. I'll have to tell something about you to him then. I'm quite reluctant to do so. His opinion would

also depress my feeling, I'm afraid. They are going to Hawaii for their honeymoon. He didn't want it because they'll spend a lot of money, but his fiancée insisted and he conceded.

Someday I want to go to France, but I heard everything in Paris is so expensive that you can't enjoy yourself without a lot of money. And I hope to be through with my French study before I leave Japan.

So I stop here and say good bye. If you come back to Aachen, should I write to that address?

With love and best wishes,

Namiko

December 24, 1976

Dear Hubert,

It is my birthday today. As you grow older, you become more and more indifferent to your birthday and I think it quite natural. I'm inclined to be like that as well. But strangely as my birthday falls on Christmas eve, anybody around me never misses my birthday. It's simply a matter of coincidence. And it's quite hard for me reflect on a deeper meaning of Christmas. Incidentally I was born on this day about 9 o'clock at night, so they say. But I'm free today, and I feel like doing something a little bit special. I want to commemorate this day especially this year, because I'm thinking that this year was quite meaningful for my life. So I went out to buy a big decoration cake. And then I looked at my old albums. And after that I'm going to listen to Christmas records. I have been expecting your letter, for a whole day today, because I thought it would be the loveliest present. But I didn't get one. But I think by writing to you especially on this day, I can make this day quite special.

It's true how lonely I feel when I don't get your letter when I especially want it. But as I firmly believe you are sure to answer me to every letter of mine, and actually you did, I can count on the following days. But at the same time, I get a little anxious if something wrong happened to you when I don't hear from you more than a week. It's a story of quite a past thing, but in September this year, I got your letter on 1st and 30th. Can you imagine how eagerly I was looking forward to your letter in that period for 30 days. (I'm not blaming you!!) But at the same time I wonder why on earth I didn't write to you even without getting yours. So this is the past. And now I decided to write to you whenever I like. When I had a chat with my mother today, she asked me doubtfully, "Namiko, are there so many things to write to you that I write to you at least once a week? Tell me what do you write to him." Of course I didn't tell her, because I've recently quit telling my parents our details.

I know many of my letters are quite nave: I couldn't have written those in Japanese. Nevertheless I enjoy writing to you, though to confess frankly, my pen sometimes does not move smoothly as before. I never want to see again what I've written to you, because then I'll be awfully ashamed. Even if something critical happened and our relation comes to nought before even seeing each other again, I won't regret, because though for a short time, you gave me a dream: you played the part of my lover. Though nobody knew what was happening secretly in my mind, I often felt a bliss, though a solitary bliss.

If you promise you don't get angry, I'll tell you. One day at dinner table my father accidentally said, "Hubert must be a romantic person to come to like an unknown Oriental girl." These words are absolutely not my invention: this is what he said.

In greeting the new year, we do a lot of preparations, for example we order rice cakes and on the 31st this month, we prepare special dinner set. They have been repeating this custom for years and years. On the first three days of the new year, everybody is gay, (drinking alcohol) from the morning till night. I don't like these three days. I always wish they passed away quickly, though in my childhood, I feared these merry days were over so quickly.

In this letter I don't feel like writing anything realistic.

I wonder if your exams are already over this month. I hope so.

So I conclude this letter here, wishing to get your letter tomorrow!

Namiko

December 25, 1975

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter indeed. As a matter of fact, I've written two letters to you which might reach Utrecht during your absence. In them I complained a little bit of your not writing me. But it's quite probable that the post service is delayed, because I got your letter today which you wrote on Dec. 13. So I'll send this letter to Aachen.

And I hope you'll be lucky enough to pass your exams. But what'll happen if you fail in one? And as for mine, the result will be informed of us a few months later.

As for my nationality, it's true that I feel like keeping Japanese one for the time being because everything is still so unsure.

About insurance, I intend to pay for an insurance company which might be American Home Assurance Company before If leave Japan as many travellers to foreign countries do. Even before going to Europe this year, I paid some amount of money. As I told you, I'll decide whether to marry or not after being in Holland for some time. But hearing from you that I could enter your insurance, I felt relieved somehow.

I'm glad to know that you're enjoying your Xmas holidays at home. I know the word, 'happy go lucky' because I learnt it in Oxford. It's really a funny word. At a glance you didn't look quite serious, I mean my first impression of yours. But I don't think we always have to take life serious. It seems to me that you're just balanced enough in your way of taking life: sometimes you would take is serious, but most of the time, you, or your consciousness try to take it quite easy. Is that right? For my past, I may tend to take it quite serious as a result of my disposition, but to be more accurate, I just ***pretend*** to be serious. However seriously you take life, life is life. And a too serious looking person may sometimes look comical, to the eyes of others. And some think life a comedy, and some tragedy. If I think life is comedy rather than tragedy, then it'll ease the burden of life in some way.

But, even after supposing life is tragedy, life may be still tinged with comical factors.

So I don't think it's quite worth-wile to take life ***very*** seriously, unless you cannot help doing so. So I don't know exactly whether I ***am*** taking life serious, but how do ***I*** look to your eyes? Though after all you don't have to exactly decide. But what is quite certain is that I don't look back upon the past much; I'm inclined to look further into the future. It's an irresistible disposition of mine, and if I could, I want to be able not to mind seriously what's going to happen in the future. It's a difficult thing for me to do. If I had been able to do that, my life would have been quite different. Maybe, for that matter, I would have quit my university before graduating it, or even I would not have entered my university, if I had decided what to do in my life at the age of 18. So I wrote quite a lot about quite abstract matters.

I really admire and love your nature(?) to do what you want. I wish I could do that as well. Anyway as I ***want*** to see you, I'm going to do!!!

Last night I drank four glasses of ***bier***, because it was my birthday. I felt quite good. Recently I don't drink whisky. The hangover because of whisky is really terrible. But ordinarily I don't drink. So when I drink sometimes, it tastes

really nice and does me good. So I hope you're enjoying drinking bier. But don't drink too much!!

As for the letter to the Amsterdam consulate, I've not yet written it, as I've told you in my last two letters. Maybe I will sooner or later. So tell me the address of The Hague someday.

Incidentally I think it'll be easier to be a student than to be a worker, if I can live, which according to your words, might be possible. And as I told you in my last letters which you might not receive, I started learning Dutch by myself. There are many words in Dutch whose meanings I can guess with the knowledge of English. Dutch language seems like a language in between German and English. And to imagine the day when I have a certain command of Dutch, makes me happy.

So your last letter was indeed a lonely Christmas present, which pleased me very much. And I hope you'll have a happy New Year and I'm looking forward to hearing from you from Aachen soon.

Bye.

Namiko

P.S.
Do you know ***the zodiac signs***?
There are twelve signs. And the year when I was born possesses the sign of ***dragon***. And next year (1976) falls on the year of dragon. I stamped this mark above on the postcards which I send in the New Year to my acquaintances.

And I wish to be as strong as a dragon!!

So happy new year!

Namiko

Dec. 31, 1975

Dear Hubert,

I hope you have a happy new year.

Incidentally I've got to tell you something which I'm really reluctant to do so: that is, well, my brother came home for his new year holidays and we discussed our affair. He advised me to make more investigation concerning your personality, for what he's worrying most is whether my future husband is a good person or not. Of course I'm believing you absolutely and it's rather a shame to tell such a thing. But my brother insisted on getting more information about your personality, say, from one of your friends. So if you don't mind (I'm sure you do mind), could you give me an address and name of your bosom friend of yours? My brother suggested a case in which you deceivingly invite me and later you would sell me as a prostitute so some place. (It's a shame just to speak of such things. He and most of the adults say it's always a woman who will be disadvantageous and cry at the end. And my brother goes on to say that I'm so young not to be able to know men's psychology and to recognize a man. But who can recognize a man from the beginning absolutely? I assure you that if I had not believed you from the beginning, do you think I could have accepted your invitation from the beginning? So I see it quite probable that my brother's opinion is simply absurd, but it's not true that he's totally opposed to marry an European. He even says that poverty and hardships do not matter much, because they are natural products for a young couple. What he thinks is most important is the personality of my future spouse. I think it quite absurd and nonsense to make an investigation of you, and if you really want to refuse my asking, I dare not to ask you more, because I'm putting a trust on you, all right. But if you don't take much offence and if you could, will you please let your bosom friend tell about you and let it be told me? For my part, if you're interested in hearing such information from a friend of mine, I'll let you know.

I know what I've written so far in this letter is quite nonsense and very strange, but I sincerely hope you'll not get angry.

Another thing that my brother firmly advised me is not to make an illegitimate child. I agree with him on this respect. As I told you, I don't want my children, so I'm going to do my best in preventing conception (Incidentally I heard that in Europe it's quite easy to get pills for preventing conception, but is it true?), but if I should be pregnant, I'd rather abort it. At least I'm thinking like this at the moment. (And abortion is quite easily done here in Japan.) I'm really afraid to be pregnant, though I'm not sure yet whether my body is by nature sterile.

So I'm terribly sorry for writing much about the depressing things.

By the way, you mentioned that if we get married, I'll need an official paper of my birth register. But is it all right that it's written in Japanese naturally or do we need a copy in other language? And ***one*** copy is enough?

As for a job, frankly, I'm reluctant to teach small children at the primary school or something like that.

My brother made me all the more depressed by saying that I'm ungrateful to my parents. He said I've not been □doing anything good to my parents. So if we get into trouble and I have to return to Japan, I won't depend on my parents any more then. It's quite reasonable.

But one thing which is sure is that I'm really thankful to you in the sense that you become at least a motive to change my life. Otherwise I would continue to be timid and leave an unsatisfactory life here in Japan. My brother asked me, "Why don't you need to take a risk deliberately?" To him what I'm going to do seems to be something unimaginably reckless. And he confessed that he'd rather advise me to take the safer way. But for all my remark about my brother, please don't criticize him. He began to sob while we were speaking, which made my heart quite sad.

I'm now reading D.H. Lawrence's "Sons and Lovers", in which there's a character of a small child named 'Hubert', who is Miriam's little brother.

So My dear Hubert, I'm very glad that you passed some of your exams, and I hope you good luck.

And try to continue your study in a good mood, O.K.?

This is the last day of the year 1975.

So with my good wishes and love,

Good-bye

Namiko

January 4, 1976

Dear Hubert,

I hope you could enjoy your holiday.

I must confess I had terrible, really terrible new year days. My heart aches still now. I'm afraid and am sure that his letter makes you sad as well.

Well, I went to a professor whom I respect quite and who knows me well and consult with him about going to Holland. He was totally opposed; he absolutely discouraged me from going there. It's not true that only because of his opinion, I'm beginning to falter. And in some way I got furious and irritated by him and it was a great deal of pain to sit and listen to what he said. He talked quite a lot. He hurt me quite a lot. I never want to see him again. Still, however, I can't deny him absolutely.

For example he said: your going there seems like jumping from a high building in spite of the fact that ten out of ten persons failed and got injured. Or it seems like going in summer clothes to the place of dead cold. Or what I call love is nothing but burning a coal in the midst of vast, vacant field and after it's burnt out, only ashes remain to me. All these are the most bitter metaphors. And he also said that it's absolutely dangerous to go there in the way I'm going to take; you seem as if you were trying to catch at a strew. Besides he said I'm not strong enough to endure everything in the life there in Europe. He emphasized the big difference of culture. And among his remarks, what hurt me most and what gave me a great shock is that compared to the Japanese, the Europeans are meat eating and that this fact causes a great difference in treating sex life. (If my remark hurt you, forgive me but please hold on and stay listening to me. As a matter of fact I myself feel quite disgusted with talking of such things.)

So he went on to say that they are almost animal like in their sexual life and he declared that I must not be able to endure it. (I know it's an unbearable insult to the Europeans, but simply he's so eager to dissuade me from going for the purpose of the substantial marriage.) But believe me that I don't believe that they are animal like in the sex; human beings are more or less animal like everywhere.

He went to Europe this autumn and met many Japanese there in Europe who looked so degraded, collapsed, haggard, tired of life and miserable. Still they can't return to Japan for some reasons. And he said that I seem as if I were trying to escape from the life as it is. It's in a sense true; I want to escape. But believe me that I accepted your invitation not firstly because I wanted to escape from here but solely because I like you and I wanted to see you and I was so happy when you offered me a suggestion. And in answering back directly after your suggestion, the idea of escaping didn't occur to me not in the least. He said I don't know what to do with myself and it's very dangerous to go there in such a condition. In Oxford and still here, I'm in such a condition as to be most highly apt to get into temptation, he said. Only a tender attitude to me from a young man, and I would jump into him. So recording to his remark, it's quite doubtful whether it's really a love. (Though I still believe it's a love, or at least pre-love.)

Another worry is the fact that your parents are opposing, which, he said however, is quite normal and full of common sense.

I'm afraid that your parents are thinking of me as a very frivolous girl, because I accepted your invitation right away.

So though he even admits that you have not in the least bit of malice or deception and you would be full of goodness and consideration at present, an actual situation might affect us and the result might be my being given up by you in a misery however firmly you promise now that you'll never give me up as far as I stay with you.

All that is part of that professor's opinion and not mine, but it's true that I'm affected by it quite a lot. However it's not that I gave up my plan absolutely, but his thoughts just had plunged me into many, many confusions and hesitations, into pondering, bitterness, sadness, madness and so on. So I don't absolutely want you to get vexed and confused.

I can imagine that since you spent your holidays with your parents, you got into troubles with them. Is that right? Don't they want me not to come to you? Though it's to you that I'm going to go. But I also imagine that it'll be a bitter thing that I wouldn't be accepted by them at all after coming all the way from such a far-away country. Again that professor's speech: “You seem to be crazily desperate! - Why should you have to throw away all of yourself now?”, he asked. But I'm not thinking I'm throwing myself away. It's a strange theory, because to see you is my strongest wish.

Oh, but if you should answer me back that you wouldn't force me to come, my conflict would increase greatly, because the more you say you won't force me, the more I come to wish to see you.

Should I wait as far as the return ticket is concerned, I can save the money enough by myself by the time of departure. But why should I wait until summer? But I ask myself why I began to hesitate to leave Japan in April. Or shouldn't I see you absolutely in the future?

Anyway one thing which is certain is that I still want to see you once again. Or can you make me lose love from the beginning? I mean, if you were to declare now that you came to love another person and you want to put an end to our affair, then it must be the greatest shock, but the fact of losing love would absolutely persuade me from not going there, though I'm not quite sure that I can put up with such a horrible situation.

That professor told me that my nerves look every exhausted; I'm not sure about that, but at least at the moment I am tired. Everything suddenly threw such a dark shadow upon me.

And about the free sex: I have not yet a very good idea about it, but at least in my mind, I don't think it a very bad thing, though whether I can accept it myself or not is a different matter.

Really I'm now very miserable. And I feel hatred to whatever I see around me. I even fancy dying with the sweetest memory that I have a lover in a far, far away country. But don't you want me to die now? will you or can you grieve over my death quite a lot? Oh, to imagine my death is one of my few consolations. He (the professor), told me a lot of terrible stories about whores or prostitutes, into which I might have a possibility to fall someday.

I'm already twenty three. I fear that as the years, months, days pass, my sex is going to wither even without being tried upon. Or I wonder if sex doesn't exist in me from the beginning. I may be like a plant, but even the plant possesses an intercourse with insects.

It's a shame, really a shame to be wistful of sex, whatever a natural thing they may say it is.

I shrink, I wither, I'm tired, I'm miserable, I'm fearing many things.

In my room there are lovely carnations which professor's wife gave me today. I'm at a loss.

The professor sticks to the point that you're a student. It's doubtful, however, that if you were working, he'll consent to our marriage in such a condition. (But again I repeat, I want you to get through your university!) He says if you enter the military service, it's doubtful whether a landlord will let me stay at an accommodation; besides your parents won't accept me. It'll be a hard circumstance if that happens.

But he said that it would be O.K. and quite reasonable to marry even an European after associating for some years: Our case might be too sudden and therefore unwise.

But I stop quoting him here. I'm so sorry if I gave you a torture by having done so. And don't think that I'm depending upon his way of thinking too much.

Yesterday, I met a best friend of mine and I let her talk of me. Though now that such an opinion seems to be not of much value, I'll quote it here, anyway.

"She's so frank to herself that she often fails to look around her and that she's liable to be criticized as being narrow minded by others.

By trying not to hurt herself and defending herself, she tends to hurt others. And consequently in return she's hurt herself for it.

She won't forgive others. She is not so strict to herself as she thinks she is.

As a whole, she's silly in a sense. If directed in an appropriate way, there will be a possibility that she could turn to have a lovable personality."

Don't take the above serious. It'll be interesting, I hope, for you and even for myself.

As for your bosom friends, I think it O.K. to take back my asking you to let him talk of you. It's up to you, now that the matter of greater importance doesn't lie there.

Incidentally I wrote a letter to the Japanese consulate in Amsterdam, anyway. It had been before I met that professor.

So I shall end this painful letter here, hoping that you won't get depressed, which is not absolutely my wish. I'll just think over the matter again and then I'll write to you.

With best wishes

Namiko

P.S.

What a cruel world!

As you mentioned you'll have your exam on Jan. 14 or 18 (I forgot), I'm afraid you will have no spare time to answer fully to one of my letters. I reflect now, that the time when we lay together on the pasture in Oxford could really be counted as ***the most beautiful moment in my life*** !

10th January, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you for your letter. I don't think the post service has been completely normalized, because I received your letter of 2nd today. But I was very glad to have it. Your letter gives me such a consolation. I think my latest letter which was a rather serious and sad one has already reached you.

I've quite recovered from the shock now, but I must confess that I'm still crazily restless. Maybe I'm looking hollow. I'm really very sorry that my mood is shifting from one extreme to another so abruptly, but I can't help it. I've called the outside world 'the callous world of cactus, callus, mushroom, log, stone and so forth!

Incidentally your Japanese letters on your envelope were well written (It's not a compliment, it's true, they were perfectly correct and there was no postman's puzzling in his delivering it to me!) Please write in that way again.

I'm reading a book, "The Savage God A Study of Suicide." You may think it's a queer taste, but strangely, I feel quite much consolation and feel stronger and more vigorous in reading about suicide or hearing or talking of it as a subject. Similarly when I see other people depressed or I hear of other's dead, I tend to have a curious ***satisfaction*** (maybe this word is not appropriate here). It doesn't necessarily mean that I'm enjoying other's misfortune, but it give me only a slight vigorous effect. Because it's ordinarily me who is depressed, not other people, at least in appearance.

What I've written on this page is of little importance and you don't have to answer. But I'm just feeling like chattering and chattering in a desultory fashion like a man of schizophrenia. I think my self seems at the moment quite ***split up***.

You mentioned you take life easily mostly, but I think that also means you are being able to be optimistic quite often. That quality I really want to have myself. So I guess you're thinking rather optimistically about your plan. It's true I could return to Japan whenever I want to, but only theoretically. I don't think the reality is that simple. I can imagine what a sore thing it is to return home completely broken hearted. But as the saying goes, "Nothing ventured, nothing gained."

I still think I want to be there in Holland in April but that's not definitely sure. You can laugh at my New Year's resolution to try to be strong. I'm laughing at myself. In these days I'm so wicked to all the others around me, especially to my family. I'm awfully ashamed to look hysteric, so I try not to be so, and maybe I look very cold now.

My mother was surprised to hear from me that you could accept my whole personality, because she thinks that if she judges me by marks, she could only give me 50 marks out of 100.

I suggest that for the time being, it would be better for us to live separately as an ordinary couple does before they get into marriage. What do you think? I think it very necessary for us to associate for some time before coming to a conclusion whether to marry or not. So could you rent me a room? I want to know if a deposit money is necessary in order to rent a room. If so, how much it'll be?

So please tell me your opinion about this in your next letter.

It's also very important to make sure what I'm going to do concretely there in Holland. So I'm anxiously waiting for an answer from the Japanese consulate in Amsterdam.

As for the Cambridge exam, all the papers were sent back to Cambridge immediately after the exam was over and they are being checked closely. Since I've already failed once, if I fail once again, I'll be terribly shocked. Last year when I heard the failing result, of course I was shocked, but then it was quite natural because it was my first try and that I had only three months to prepare for the exam. But the result was not too bad on the whole; I failed only in one paper out of four. Anyway, I don't like my peace of mind to be disturbed by the result of the exam. If I succeed, the situation won't change much in appearance, but I'm sure the fact of success would give me much confidence. If I fail, the opposite.

Sometimes I fancy calling you up, especially when everything seems too unbearable for me to endure. If we can really see each other in April, I think I can endure it without calling you up.

But if we can't, I can't help calling you up some day. If I call you up on weekdays at 9:00 a.m., you can get it 5:00 p.m. At what time are you home generally?

You know I feel very, very lonely and solitary. My heart is on the brink of breaking because of loneliness.

Still those bitter words of that professor I mentioned last time are ringing in my mind and they almost drive me mad. He's sixty. I wish he would die soon.

They said I'm a totally spoilt child, I have no consideration to others.

Recently I tend to hear imaginary sounds of telephone bell.

I have one future dream: to go to California with you someday. I once mentioned about an American sister from California. She's so nice; unlike a sister. I like her very much.

So I think you found this letter's argument is not consistent, I shift from one subject to another so quickly like a lunatic. I wish I were a gentle harmless lunatic; that'll make everything easier.

But I'm all right. Don't worry. But I want you to worry about me. I hope you a good luck in your exams. But when on earth will they end?

So long.

Namiko

13th January 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your answer to that desperate letter of mine. In fact I was afraid of your answer, and I'm so glad that your answer came so soon; it took only 4 days. Moreover, as your letter was full of kindest consideration to me, I was moved deeply. And now I tell you I've made up my mind: I ***accept*** your suggestion. That means I postpone my departure until July. It's true that 5 months is quite a long time, but I think I can manage to endure it, because during that period I can save more money and learn Dutch more.

Now:

1) What should I do with the visa which I applied for and which is to be granted before April?
2) When should I arrive in Europe? What would be the most convenient date? I could put off the departure date of that Aeroflot plane to Amsterdam until July. If I arrive in Amsterdam, tell me what day would be the most convenient one. (I mean, when do you return to Aachen on your summer holiday?)
3) During summer holiday where can we stay? (I mean, could you let me stay at your parents' house for some time? Or can't we travel in Europe? I'd like to travel to France and Switzerland, especially.)

It's a little pity that we have to arrange things in this way, but I can understand that it's far wiser to do so, in order to assure the greater happiness of our future. To be reasonable was really bitter for me, but I earnestly hope that our reasonable decision of now will come to a better end.

Though I'm not extremely depressed now, in the recent days I was suffering quite a lot. I was totally at a loss. But now, I'm quite relieved and feel easier thanks to you.

When I got your brief letter just preceding your latest letter, I guessed you got a little angry and I realized I had said a wrong thing in my previous letters. I began to answer to that letter last night, but I got your letter this morning, I tore it up.

So please forgive me for what I've told in the recent letters and my crazing loss of mental balance. Don't get fed up with me. For my part, I began to like you all the more for these recent troubles.

And lastly I want to say congratulations for your successful exams so far.

And even if you're busy, don't fail to write to me. Only a short letter would be all right; it's quite enough to make me feel happy for a while. So good bye for now, wishing you a good luck in the rest of your exams.

Namiko

17th January 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter. This is the fastest record of post service, for it took only 3 days for your letter to reach me.

I've not completely recovered from depression but at least I've restored equanimity of mind. By going to California I don't mean the means of escaping from the present life; it's just a sweet sentimental fancy and means nothing more than that. But I guess why you hate America so strongly is that before your coming there, you had had so great an anticipation, but after actually being there, you were greatly disillusioned. For my part, I've still a faint yearning for especially rural part of America. But America seems to me so complicated that I don't think I can understand the essence of it now.

I've already told you my decision to go to Europe in summer in my previous letter. As for money, I think I can save some more money for the stay there apart from tickets, by myself, so I won't, or I don't hope I will trouble you much in the monetary affair. Already I have enough money to buy return tickets.

Though you always say that you can't plan life, it's very painful and full of uncertainty to think of what will be after three months' holiday.
I don't doubt such a vacancy of this summer will be most delightful, as far as vacancy is concerned.

Right now, I'm thinking of my future vision. I mean I must find what to do from April. Because in April I will be no longer a part time teacher, though I'll continue my side jobs as a tutor. One lady assistant professor once advised me to study at university either as a post graduate student or as an occasional student. I don't want to do either of them. I said to her I can study by myself, but she said that 'something you have to do' is sometimes necessary, because in her opinion, I reject everything which I don't like, so fiercely. It's true, I reject and reject, like a spoilt child, only to come back to my old, inner, firmly closed self and come to think of suicide or destructive things. In a word, I'm so isolated from the society. I know that, but I'm afraid of society. I myself don't think random study is so bad, but that lady professor thinks it better for me to study more academically and systematically. (She is in the thirties; don't think I'm again affected by what others say. She happened to give me a call the other day.) But I can't believe academism saves me. It's so remote from reality. So I myself think I'm earnestly and seriously seeking for what I should do is best in my future, but nobody believes or understand me. To the eyes of outsiders, I look so unsettled and unbalanced.

After all I think I'll be reduced to a self destruction in a distant (or otherwise) future sooner or later, though I've never attempted it absolutely seriously. Why I say such a thing is not exactly I'm in a depressed mood, but it's my long time obsession. But as I told you, I'll never die before I see you once again.

As for visa, have you already got inquiry from the consulate? They may ask you if it's true that you're going to marry me and if you say no, visa won't be granted. In that case, my position will become a little strange, because they might think it's my invention that we planned to marry. I wonder what kind of answer you're going to make.

Isn't it your principle as well that you try to avoid what you don't like to do as far as it's possible? It's my principle too. I wonder what's wrong with it.

My way of living right now might look so unreal, compared to the ordinary person's. But this is my way and I prefer this than otherwise. Sometimes even recently I feel quite happy at least for a moment, because I'm so free now. Such a sense of freedom I've never got in my school days.

Incidentally I'm thinking whether I should begin to study Dutch or German. I'm going to start either of them. I was just thinking of Dutch, but German is also possible. In a month or so, I'll have got through with my French lesson by linguaphone, but I don't think I can speak French.

I still quite often feel lonely and distracted. Indeed 5 months is so long that our plan of summer is beginning to seem so unreal. But all I must do is wait. When the time comes, it comes. Then after all everything in life is temporary. And again that sweet temptation of death reveals itself before me. To die manly is one of my greatest wishes, because my way of living has been anything but praiseworthy. But don't get bored even if I speak of death and suicide. It's my hobby.

So I shall post this letter tonight, a moment after I seal it up. It's about 10:00 p.m. now.

Good night.

Namiko

26th January 1976

Dear Hubert,

I feel like writing to you now; I expected your letter a little earlier, but I didn't get it, so I'm afraid my letter before my last one did not reach you in which I had written my decision about going to Europe next summer.

Well in these days, I'm not good, not bad. But sometimes I feel very tired and weak in my nerves.

I came to realize wherever I may go, there won't be any way to escape from myself. I wonder why I can't stop thinking about death.

Today my grandmother whose husband died a few months ago called on our house. She looked very enfeebled and weak and old. I don't think she'll live long. She said she felt very shocked and lonely since his death. She's indeed very apt to shed tears. She looked very ugly because of age. I don't hate her much, I just feel a pity for her, but when I had to have a lunch beside her, my appetite began to decrease because I was obliged to look at her from time to time which made me very, very uncomfortable. I don't think she loved her husband right from the beginning of her marriage, but she obeyed him very faithfully and served him until his death, making herself sacrificed. So after his death, her loneliness is too much for her to endure. In many cases, a husband dies first, and a wife survives him. But my dear Hubert, I don't want you to die before me; I want to die before you, no matter when we may die.

At the moment, you're just my image, a consolation of my heart. In order to love you, I must love such a tremendous geographical distance as well. (Can you understand this?) Honestly it's too much. It's quite hard. I don't think the power of will is the only question. What I dread most is that when we meet again, each of us might feel disillusioned.

Curiously enough, the memory of Oxford sometimes makes my heart ache, apart from the beautiful memories with you. It's something akin to a nightmare, because almost every moment I was suffering somewhere in my heart. Though to the eyes of others, my suffering may look nothing. But anyway I won't stick to the past much. But that past is the only resources to stir up your actual image, apart from your letters.

I don't want to live long to be very old and ugly. We add days, months, years to our past, only to be ugly. It's no wonder. Because as we get tired at night, we get tired as we grow older. I wish I would die reasonable young and less ugly.

But I wonder if I really want to die. At one time I'm quite indifferent to death, and at another I yearn for it. Death is the only thing that is certain. Have you ever thought how would you react if death comes to you so suddenly, so unexpectedly in such a near future.

Think of me at 6:00 p.m. when I lie down sleepless at
2:00 a.m.

Incidentally what do you want to do after graduating from university? You might say you've not decided yet, but have you really anything that you really want to do risking whole your life? And tell me what kind of study you're doing now actually. You once said you were going to study German, but I wonder how the study of the language itself interests you.

I'm a sort of a dilettante of everything; I'm not a specialist in any field at present, and I'm afraid I'll continue to be like that. There's no limit in, for examples, studying English as a foreign language, but I think there is an absolute limit in studying it. I'm afraid of the Cambridge exam result. If I should fail, it's absolutely certain that I'll get awfully shocked and discouraged. In Europe, especially in England, I was really ashamed even of the fact that I have specialized in English and English literature. The reality and the academic world are totally different. Here in Japan, on the other hand, I'm not too ashamed of the fact that I'm studying English, but still there's much gap, or there's no connection between study and life. Anyway I think I'll continue to study English, even though at random.

Forgive me for writing much which doesn't seem of much importance.

About the day of departure, if the day will not be changed by the company (it's Sunday), June 27 or July 4, which of these are more convenient to you!

Especially soon after I get up in the morning (or nearby at noon), I instinctively tend to think that my going to next summer is a dream, not a reality, because then by brain is obscure. But at night, especially before I go to sleep, I begin to picture vividly in my mind how the things are going on there in Europe. Many of the people around me regard my plan as an adventure. It might be. But I don't think you regard it as an adventure.

I wonder if the mail service is delayed because of the heavy snow. In the country it could be recently. But do you think airplanes are affected by the snow.

It's about a quarter past twelve at midnight. I hope you are well. Are you really all right? And I also hope you've already got through your exams. I hate, hate, hate, hate, hate, hate exams, both taking them and being a questioner of them. (Today the exam of my class took place. I was terribly ashamed of so many incorrectly typewritten letters.)

And lastly I want to share with you what a friend of mine once said to me about us. "I really wish your happiness from the opposite side of the globe." (She's already assumed my being in Europe.)

Give me a letter, please!!!!!!!

Namiko

P.S.
An answer from the Amsterdam consulate has not come yet. I posted it on Jan. 4.

29th January 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your last two letters. Strangely enough, I received them on the same day.

And first of all, I must apologize you if my last letter would charge you extra fare, because although the mail fare in Japan had been raised, I didn't know about that and so I just put the stamp for the former fare.

As for my departure date, will you let me know when exactly your exams will take place in July as soon as you know it. And then I'll fix the date.

About visa, you said 'leave it alone'. I think so, too. Until it is actually granted, I won't say anything to the consulate, for it's not certain that it will be absolutely granted. If it should be granted, I think I should tell them that I want to cancel it, because otherwise I'll have to take a physical examination and present other official papers such as my birth register. But on the other hand, I feel it a little pity to cancel it if it's at last granted after having taken quite a lot of pain. I think if the plan of our living together in Holland is to be reduced to be nought forever, then the visa will be completely of no use. But you know, it's not certain whether I'll return to Japan exactly after three months. Anyway I'll leave it alone for the time being.

If I intend to stay in one country in Europe except England as a tourist, except for England, I heard I can stay there for three months without a visa. So I can't understand 'tourist visa'. For, for me it's improbable to stay in one country as a tourist more than three months.

I understand your feeling of getting angry with government officials. Although it's their job, they look inhuman. but I wonder why you had to go to the police. I think the police is the place where everybody hates to go. And I suggest if they, government officials continue to assume that inhuman attitude let's kill them, shall we?!

By the way, why are you always in a hurry when you write to me? I know you want to post your letter as quickly as possible. But indeed you seem to be always in a hurry. I've always noticed that there's a great difference between your letter from Utrecht and the one from Aachen. Of course the latter is far nicer. From your letter from Aachen, I always feel that you're very comfortable there.

But on one hand you're saying you're busy, on the other, you seem to come back to Aachen quite often. I'll give you a second name: You are 'Wanderer'.

I'm not having a wonderful time here in Japan at all. It's still winter; that's one reason. And how slowly time passes. January is at last about to end. Unless I relax for another 5 months, I'll go crazy. Relaxation is the very think that I have to do.

I do not wish to have these hard days and months again after the next summer. So sometimes I come to think if I should not meet you again in order to prevent the following all the harder days. But I think if I don't see you again at a reasonable time, not too prolonged time, I'll regret it all my life.

Yesterday I was out of my self control; I lost mental balance badly. So, I wanted to write to you, but I refrained myself from doing it, because a letter written in that mood would be terrible and would surely make you feel uncomfortable.

I have at the moment a very vague plan in my mind; That is, if I succeed in the Cambridge exam, I could enter an university in Britain from next October, at the soonest. But there are still many difficulties in this plan. For example it'll be very hard for me to keep up with the university life in England, especially when it comes to intend to gain a degree. And there's also the financial problem. But anyway, if I'm in England, it's the same Europe, and I would be nearer to you than when I'm in Japan. but as for this matter, I'll tell you later again.

Lastly I'll tell you one stupid story about my brother's marriage. The parents of his fiancée bought furniture too much for their new marriage life. But as their new accommodation is so small, they can't install all the furniture there, so they asked our home to keep one of them semi permanently. That furniture with her clothes which would be used only rarely, we won't need at all. It'll only take a lot of space. I really think they should have just bought enough furniture for their new dwelling. If I were to marry in that way, I'll receive only money and then I'll buy a necessary thing one by one.

So I stop here, hoping you're fine and hearing from you soon.

Namiko

P.S.
Have you already any concrete plan in our vacancy? I feel, more than a month of mere going touring will be too much. But I believe to spend the time with you will give me a lot of pleasure even in a foreign country.

3rd February 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter. I'm afraid the post service is again not so fast. And I'm surprised you still have to sit for your exams. I wish they were already over now.

Well, about the Japanese gentleman you mentioned, I ask you to let him tell me something about the life in Europe. So I enclose a letter to him in this envelope and please send it to him from you. I've remembered that in Oxford you were speaking of a Japanese man who is studying gymnastics science(?) and whose wife and children are in Japan and who has a rich sponsor and who is very, very hard studying and whose name was S. Morino or something like that. Is that the very person you were mentioning? But it seems to me very funny that you call him 'a boy'.

In a couple of days, it's quite warm like an early spring here in Japan. It's warm enough to go out with a skirt and thin stockings. But it's likely to be colder again sooner or later. I'm anxious that the warm spring season will make me restless.

Yesterday I finished checking my exam papers of my class. I hate this work; it's so annoying. One of the reasons I hate the vocation of teacher is exams. Of course I hate to sit for any exam myself, but correcting it is my pet aversion. Can you imagine how nerve destroying it is for me to see all those strange and stupid English sentences which more than eighty students wrote? They're not so bad in translating English into Japanese, but the opposite is awful. I have not strong nerves enough to get on with their stupid sentences. Moreover the Japanese itself of some of the students are terrible; I wonder if they're genuine Japanese. Of course there are some good students, but strangely I can't be so sympathetic with excellent students.

I'm now crazily thinking what to do until July. I don't have to go to school any more and so I can do other side jobs, besides my tutorship. But I'm very reluctant to do trivial jobs such as waitress. For me, tutoring is not a regular work but it seems easier and more paid per hour than any other work I can do at the moment. But after all tutoring is a temporary work and doesn't give me much satisfaction.

So I'm usually inclined to be nihilistic toward everything. Since our change of our plan I've been like this. Before that, though I'd been too emotionally carried away, I felt myself more vigorous and more energetic.

At home I'm as if 'an alien'. And my father called my room 'the place of extra territoriality'. I've lost much interest in everything Japanese, nevertheless, I can't accept all the Western culture. I'm dangling in the air, so to speak.

I hope you're well both mentally and physically.

I'll try to cope with the life here. And I sincerely appreciate your kind offer to get into contact with the Japanese 'boy'. I hope he's a good person.

So I stop here, hoping luck for your exams if you have still any more.

Good bye

Namiko

7th February, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter. I was very glad to get it this Saturday afternoon. This morning there were three letters in our letter box but none of them was yours. So I thought I would get one next Monday. But in the afternoon I peeped again into the letter box, still expecting the rarest chance, and there I found it! I believe it's a mercy of that authoritative post office who might pity me for waiting your letter until Monday. But I'm afraid I shouldn't write about these things so lengthy, because the post fare was raised and I'll have to give priority to more important things.

About the departure date, is it really all right for one to go to the travel agency and ask them to change the date of departure on July 4? Shall I wait for a little more while until your exam date is known?

I got a little excited to hear your outline of our Vacancy. And I hope there'll be cheap accommodations during travels. But one drawback of the summer season is that there would be a lot of tourists all round Europe. It cannot be helped, though.

It think it's a crazy (or bloody?) system that you have more than two months' exam period. Will it be like that in June/July as well? I hope not.

You mentioned you don't fear of being disillusioned and asked me why I fear it. But I'd like to ask you why do you not fear it. But on the other hand there may be the case utterly otherwise after actually seeing each other.

I try to take our plan easy, though it's quite difficult to do so. By taking it easy, I don't mean not to be serious, but I mean not to be stiff and to be relaxed. (It's always easy to say)

You may think it strange, but in feeling, I don't think myself quite young. In a sense my nerves have been already exhausted in these several years. And ashamed to say, I can't imagine my life after thirty. But at the same time, I know that a human being could exert his or her utmost power at the critical moment, however weak he has seemed before.

I'm glad to hear you are enjoying studentship because it's very free. I think it's a very good thing to enjoy it, regardless of your study.

As for 'the Venus of Milo', I know it, it came to Japan when I was a child, though I didn't go visit it. I suppose it's a Venus with one of her arms destroyed when discovered.

The other day I saw on T.V. the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympic Games held in Innsbruck in Austria. Of course I saw the athletes from the Netherlands. The scene was very beautiful, the nature. Also in the newspaper, I read an article in which says that in Amsterdam, all the canals are frozen and people are enjoying skating on its natural skating link, and that no wonder the participants from such a country is powerful. Don't you skate as well? It's quite unimaginable for me to imagine all the canals are frozen. At home I rarely see even the frozen water, though I may get up too late to see it. What I still cannot understand is the 'dry coldness'. In Japan it's 'dump coldness' I think and the temperature doesn't fall below zero in day time where I'm living. So I suppose it's colder there in Europe. But the dry cold is milder than dump cold, is it right? Anyway winter is winter, it's cold enough. Recently the cold has come again. I hope you won't catch a cold.

So I must quit here, I'm going out for tutoring a boy.

Good bye with best wishes

Namiko

Intermezzo

READ THIS ONE FIRST!

As for my present life, I think I'm very free in the sense that no one forces me anything and I have a lot of free time. Nevertheless I'm not happy with it. But I'm sure as soon as I am forced by something or somebody again, I'll de my best to try to get out of it as soon as I can.

My mother sometimes asks me: have you really no intention to marry some Japanese male and settle somewhere in Japan? I usually reply to her, "No, at least for the time being." But she threatens me, "You'll feel miserable when you're thirty and you're still single." Whenever I think of this sort of marriages I feel tired and fed up.

For her I think it's still an incredible matter that I should marry you, though we've put aside this problem for the time being. But I think even if I ***should not*** go to Europe and see you, I would not marry anybody, ***sans aucun doute***!

So excuse me for this strange letter. And tell me in your next letter if you would not want this sort of letter. Good-bye and if you have an exam today or tomorrow I wish you good luck! It's almost my bedtime. I'm going to bed right after I seal this up. It's about 1:00 a.m.

Namiko

11th February 1976

Dear Hubert,

I felt like writing to you badly, though not for a business-like purpose. For me one day is too long. Everyday in these days, there is an awful 'superfluity' of time in one day in which I don't know what to do. And the things I might do, whatever it may be, seem to me in vain and full of emptiness. Reading, for example, I do, but in a very roundabout way, which doesn't bring me much satisfaction, though I hate 'obliged reading'. In short, I'm afraid if I'm wasting a lot of time in this way; on appearance or externally I may not waste it or I'm not always idle. You know, I have only another seven years to live which I've decided, though not absolutely, to keep on living anyway. There is a contradiction in this point: I admit life is short, especially youth is short, while I presume I will live for another many years unless I stop it deliberately or some fatal accident or illness occurs. When I was around twenty, I planned my life in this way. So it's a rather old decision, but still it remains as an obsession. While I was in Europe last summer, from time to time this impulse to death arose, but at that time I thought: I should not die here in Europe which is so far from my home, because if I die here, I would disturb terribly a lot not only my parents but many other people concerned with that trip and those of Oxford. So I thought then, if I die, I would die in Japan. Maybe I should not have brought suicide desire to Europe. Or I have no right to speak of death or suicide because didn't so far.

This is a story of the past. But when I am in Europe, it's almost 100 % certain again that I would be in such a mood again. But still then I would not die

deliberately in Europe for the same reason, save the case in which I go to Europe for the suicide purpose. But its cause is absolutely ridiculous, because if I really want to die, I could die here much cheaply.

Right now I'm not in a very depressed mood. If so, you may wonder why I write about these things morbidly. I think it's morbid or neurotic or obsession. But I've not gone mad yet. These subjects I am really thinking in that way ordinary. This letter is a mere presentation or glimpse of the empty interior of my mind. But so much for this subject. After writing, I'm much ashamed of it. So unless I seal this letter up tonight, I won't post it tomorrow.

12th February 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter. Another letter I enclosed with this letter was written yesterday. I hesitated a lot whether to send it or nor again today, but I decided to do so.

I'm awfully ashamed of myself having written in that way, for if I am to speak of self destruction in front of you, it might mean that I don't love you and that I'm an egoist very much, only thinking of myself. It shouldn't be so.

From your letter I see you're not leading a carefree life but quite a hard life (it seems to me to be so, at least). But still I cannot understand why they have to do such a huge amount of exams. It seems that in almost the second half period of the whole academic year you are sitting for exams. Why do they have to do such a think, I wonder. I imagine all the university professors are crazily fond of teasing students by exams; they must be a nasty 'exam worm'. So even if admitted, I would not wish to enter and study in such a university; it would be too hard for me. I hate exams. When I was in a college, I had exams only twice a year, each of which lasted 10 days or so. But I'm glad that you are skilfully coping in such a crazy system, and above all, you've passed all the exams you've taken so far. Hearty congratulations! But at the same time I think it's a natural consequences of your serious study, for I guess you're studying quite hard, aren't you.

I once heard that almost all the festivals are concentrated in April in Europe and in April in Holland tulips are in full bloom. On my desk right now, there is an ugly(?) tulip. It's scarlet, but the opening of its petals stopped before opening them completely and so the shape of petals are so imperfect.

There's a small worry at the moment: that is, when the visa is granted, I'll have to tell the consulate official to postpone the departure. Then I'll have to reveal the change of our plan more or less. Is that O.K.? When recollecting the face of that Japanese official, I get a little bit gloomy. He is the very person that said sneeringly to me on my first visit there; "Ah, your love is merely a love of one short summer day." But by accident, we're the graduates of the same university, he said so. He specialized in Spanish, but graduated from his alma mater in the very year I was born. Or do you think visa is totally unnecessary and I should cancel it? For it's not sure yet whether I'll need it from next October onward.

By the way, here comes a silly question: What does the sign "+" mean on your envelope?

So, I quit here today. Today it's blowing so hard that it damaged my set hair on the way home from the beauty salon.

Good-bye

Namiko

14 February 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter. It was so interesting and delightful. It was raining today and so gloomy a day. This morning I got a letter from Amsterdam. It says: I must send to the consulate my curriculum vitae and a photo. But they say, "... it is very difficult at the moment to obtain a working permit for a person not having the Dutch nationality, you may rest assured, that in co operation with the Japanese Embassy at The Hague, everything possible will be done to be of assistance to you in this respect." That's all. So they don't tell me whether there's a position, say, as a teacher of Japanese. I'm not sure if I send my personal history and photo to them. Now I'm not so positive to the matter of work. The stupid thing is, they make a mistake in writing my name, though it reached my house safely, which may be because the address was perfectly correct and we are very old inhabitant in this district.

By the way think you very much for your having taken pain to transmit my letter to M. Morino. When I get an answer from him, I'll tell you what he says. I myself don't remember well what I wrote to him, but as far as I remember, I asked him if he sees any internationally married couple who is going well, and about some of the Japanese in Europe who failed in the life in Europe, who look tired with life, look hollow and maybe poor, nevertheless who cannot go back to Japan. And also our situation; you're student and will continue your study for a couple of years, while I have no regular work. And also I told my vague fear of our cultural and physical difference in case of marriage. As a whole I wrote to him very pessimistically as is my habit. I'm glad to hear that he's from Kobe, because both Kobe and Kyoto are in the Kansai area and from Kyoto to Kobe it takes less then two hours. Besides Kobe is a very beautiful, and refined city and I like it quite a lot. If we should marry and if we have a chance of living in Japan, Kobe is the city in which I'd like to live. But again this is an illusion. Te tell the truth, I have a vague premonition that we won't marry. Because, you know, I cannot be optimistic to this matter. Besides, when I heard from you about your university life of now, I felt you're very preoccupied with your present life during the academic period. I think it physically all right and natural, but anyway it is likely that during the academic period there's hardly any room for me to enter your life unless I have something definitely to do there in Holland.

You know, I've already denied the possibility of studying at the Utrecht University because I don't accept that crazy examination system. As for work, the future perspective seems quite dark, judging from the letter from Amsterdam. ... Sorry, that I write again in a pessimistic tone. I didn't intend to have done so, because I enjoyed your letter very much and it vivifies my image about your present life.

The reason why I remember Mr. Morino's name so well is that for one thing it's very easy for me to remember a Japanese name at the first hearing and that his personal story interested me very much when you told me about him. You said his family is coming to France to live with him: it reminds me of one of my uncles case. My uncle is a professor of physics and more than 10 years ago when I was still a very small child, he went to Munich to study. He first left Japan alone. But after a while his wife, together with two children, one of them was still a baby, went after him. I think it was a great decision of her to go all the way to München

with such small creatures. Moreover the expenses for his family were not paid; they spent their own money to manage that.

About the departure date, for myself July 4 is all right, if it's all right for you. And as for my work, I won't work as a waitress. Did I really declare that I'm going to be a waitress? The type of work which I prefer is translation and I think there are such jobs here in Japan, but unfortunately many of them require a regular worker and the location may be Tokyo which I'm unwilling to go. Because of our plan, I don't want to fix myself as a regular worker. So I'm looking for some reasonable work. At any rate, during this month I decided to stay at home mostly, because February is not the month for activities. I'm 'hibernating'.

About D.H. Lawrence, I finished reading "Sons und Lovers" some time ago. Do you have read it? Well, I quite like Paul Morel, the protagonist, his dark, introvert character, but I hate Miriam terribly. In that book, the sexual descriptions appeared less than I had expected. But I don't like Lawrence very much, particularly his face, I saw his picture on the back of the page. It looked very mean and appalling. At least for the time being I won't concentrate on one particular author. So now I'm reading Oscar Wilde's "Picture of Dorian Gray".

About Georges Bataille: I'm sorry, I've never heard that name. Did you really tell me about him? All I remember is that your favourite writers are Guy de Maupassant, Camus, D.H. Lawrence, and the plot of a story by Camus in which the mother kills a traveller and robs his money and throws his body into the river without knowing that he is her real son. Is that the story by Camus? My memory is very poor in some fields. As for Bataille's book, I think I can manage to read it, even if it is written in French, though it may take me a very long time to read through it. But I imagine even the original book is not easily available in Japan. Anyway, I'll try to get it sooner or later.

Incidentally I've not yet heard anything about visa. I'm still thinking how to speak to the consulate official, when going. This is one thing which makes me uneasy, and another factor is that the result of Cambridge exam will be informed in no time, maybe within this month. Regardless of its practical value, I want to succeed now that I've tried twice.

That terrible line still remains in my mind "I'm sorry to inform you that you did not succeed in ..." Go to hell!

I wrote a postcard in my poorest Dutch to your landlord. Those Dutch are all the borrowings from the Dutch text. I feel sorry for him, too. But I personally hate drunkards. The awful smell of alcohol makes me sick. But I wonder how he can manage his life, drinking all the time.

But it's not only him who doesn't know why he's living. It's true of me, too. And maybe of many.

I've not yet had any concrete plan about studying in England. If there are a lot of exams in England as well, I dare not go there. My father once said that he could send me about more or less 83 a month for one year if I study abroad. I don't want to depend on him in that way. Besides one is not enough for complete the study. So again I'm thinking and thinking.

Well this paper is the last one which remains for tonight. It's nearly 2:00 a.m. So I can't write more anymore. Can you read my writings? I'm sleepy. I reserved the whole late evening to write to you, for when I got your letter this afternoon, I was eager to write to you on the spot, but as I had to go out, I couldn't write in the afternoon.

Your last letter really tells that you're in a very good mood and it made me feel good as well. It was as if it reproduces many scenes of that delightful summer.

And lastly thank you so much as well for telling me the address of Hague Embassy anyway.

The moment to end every letter to you is a very sad moment, because from that moment on, I'll have to wait for some while for your next letter's coming.

Good night, dear Hubert.

Namiko

16th February 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter. I was about to go out this morning when I got it. From last week I've been receiving your letters quite often; Thursday, Saturday and Monday (today). It's so lovely a thing to get them in this way, but I fear after a while an interval should come when I'll have to wait more than 10 days. I mean the delivery of the post is very whimsical; sometimes it takes quite a long time for our letters to be delivered. I even envy letters themselves who can travel by air so frequently between us.

Well, first of all I'd like to ask you: Is your knee all right? What happened? Can you walk? I wish it were perfectly cured by now and you could jump and stand on your hands in the gymnasium.

Incidentally I've not yet got the answer from Monsieur Morino. I hope to get it within this week. He must be very busy, I imagine.

Today I went to Nara, an ancient capital of Japan in one time, to see a lady assistant professor. She also took part in the Oxford summer school two years ago. We just chattered nearly for two hours. She said, if I stay for quite a long time in Holland or somewhere in Europe and get to know you and the way of living there very much, then the marriage after ***that*** procedure would seem quite reasonable or conceivable.

Maybe it's true. But she didn't particularly refer to our case. People with different nationalities might get married quite by accident in this way. She's a good person, but we can speak with each other much more easily or lightly than when I speak with that man of sixty whom I mentioned in some of my previous letters. So she didn't give me any shock. On the contrary 'je pouvais me distraire trop'. It was raining ***aujourd'hui***. But it was very, very damp like a rainy season in June. Right now it's raining very hard outside, though the air is quite warm.

As for Georges Bataille, I heard that the study of him is getting quite popular among the students of French literature here in Japan, so the translations may be available in the bookshops, though I've not yet tried to get one. About 'Madame Bovary' I read it in Japanese translation a couple of years ago. All I remember about this book is that it's so boring and doesn't interest me very much. Do you like Flaubert?

By the way, can you read my letters? I don't need to write in this way, because I have an ample supply of papers today!

In your letter you said you're more connected with West Germany. But is there really much difference of culture, habit and way of living between the two countries? If you are to live in West Germany after you finish your study in Holland, and still will you remain a Dutch subject and receive other social benefits from Holland? I can't quite understand this point. And before you came to Holland, when you were a student of Aachen University, where did you get your grant. I wonder what kind of feeling it is to have a Dutch nationality and to feel yourself a German. It sounds like a sort of ambivalence to me. And this reminds me of some Japanese who immigrated to America in World War II and willingly sacrificed their own lives simply for the improvement of the position of the Japanese in America. It is said that they fought very bravely. I think it's always a very hard thing to survive in a foreign country for a long time.

Incidentally isn't there any spare room in your present landlord's house? I mean, when I'll be in Utrecht. And as for departure date, maybe I'll fix it on July 4, if the plane schedule is not altered.

From your letter I can imagine you're in a really very good mood. Je voudrais sentir comme toi! I'm quite all right. I'm glad that I didn't catch many colds during this winter time. But my nerves are not so healthy, I dare say. I hear imaginary metallic sounds of telephone ringing from time to time when I'm at home. This, I'm afraid, is some bad symptom of some neurotic disease. Today when I was on a train, the machine of train announcement went wrong and the voice was too loud and broken at each station when the conductor announced. It was indeed unbearable. But to my great surprise, everybody seemed all right or at least quite indifferent to it.

In my part, I was annoyed by that crazy broken voice for 40 minutes. It made me cause headache, indeed!

Maybe I'm going to start learning German, though I had mentioned I started Dutch if I am to live in Holland, but at any rate, I want to communicate with you in German some day. I like studying languages, generally, though any language takes a very long time to master. In three days, I'll get through with my French lesson by linguaphone.

Last night I dreamed the dream of you. In that dream I was weeping. I don't know what it's about, though I was understanding while the dream lasted. It was something of telephone. I may have talked on the international phone too long. But everything was so obscure. And strangely the image of the Dutch queen, Juliana which I think is on the stamp, was lingering within me. It may be because I read an article connected with her in which it was said that there was a possibility of her husband's receiving a bribery from the American airplane company Lockheed. I first thought that it was a man’s head – the picture which is on your stamps, but now I know that it is the portrait of her majesty, the queen. And I even didn't know that there was a royal family in Holland. The article also said that the Dutch royal family is one of the richest royal families in the world. Of course there is a royal family in Japan, too.

Well, it stopped raining now. I wish it would be fine tomorrow. And I'll write to you around 28th Feb. to Aachen.Good-bye, hoping your knees are all right!

Namiko

27th Feb. 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter. It reached me exactly on Saturday. Dear mail service!

Well, there's good news: I passed the Cambridge Exam. So I'm ***so*** happy! Before I heard this result a couple of days ago, I had been threatened by so many daydreams and nightmares for about a week. My physical sickness may have been mainly due to that mental tensions, for from the day when I knew the result, I have been feeling better and better. The rapidity of my recovery is really remarkable or in a sense comical, for on the previous day of that day I was in bed all day. And the imaginary sounds of telephone ringing seem to almost disappear at the moment.

There are three grades for the successful candidates: A: Very Good, B: Good, C: Pass. Mine is grade B, so I'm quite content with the result, for I had been hoping to pass even in the lowest grade. But there's still one worry: that is the slip which informed us of the result says that the 'Examinations Syndicate' reserves the right to correct the information given before the issue of certificate to successful candidates. So I have an obsession that later they might tell me that the result already given me was a mistake and I did not succeed as a matter of fact. It's an obsession and it sounds ridiculous, but I can't be completely at ease until I get the certificate in my hands actually.

So my English proficiency has been proved at least officially in applying for the British universities. And I'm thinking what to do. If I apply for one of the universities there and if I am admitted for the next academic year of this year, I could go to U.K. after we meet in summer. But there're some difficulties in this plan. First financial one: maybe I'll be able to find some scholarship later, but until then, I'll have to have my parents give me the fund. They are not altogether unwilling to give it to me, but I myself don't want to trouble them in giving me the huge amount of money for I'm so unsure of my really getting a fruitful result after studying abroad. For I heard it's quite hard to acquire M.A. in Britain for a foreign student.

In short I don't have courage enough to venture the plan of my studying in Britain. But when I think of the thing after our meeting in summer, I think it a good opportunity to go to U.K. in succession from Germany or Holland, for you know, if there's nothing else for me to do after our vacancy, I'll have to go back to Japan. I feel like studying more, though I've not yet decided the theme; all that is certain is I like to read modern prose literature. But my parents say that if there isn't possibility of proper occupation benefited by the study abroad ... Although what will happen is never known now, he has a reason, for studying abroad costs a lot of money. But there is also a good point in my using my parents' money; when I realize can't cope with the student life abroad, it'll be easier to quit than when I have others or other organizations finance me. Maybe I'm going to apply for one of those universities for the next academic year, whether or not I accept it if I'm admitted. Or maybe it's too late for the next application because it's already almost March. So my situation has been slightly changed after knowing the exam result. But what is unchanging is that I'm thinking and hesitating and worrying again. Regardless of the result, I've not yet had enough confidence in English. It's very obvious that in a foreign country I get more nervous and lose more confidence and

feel inferiority complex. So I'll tell you more about this matter in my next letter, after thinking it over.

Well, about the accommodation, I don't know well how to answer. In the first place, I can't imagine what the living in one room is like. I can understand your point; to rent a room is very expensive and to do so for such a short period would be quite nonsense. So if I stay at your room, it would be most economical. How much does the rent cost per month for your present room?
I have no intention of absolutely insisting on having a single room, but I'm just afraid of living in that way immediately after I arrive in Holland.

And I'm so glad to hear that your knee has been all right. But did you walk that distance in the dark all alone? Walking alone for a long distance would be unbearable for me.

I wonder if you really travelled back to Aachen. If you didn't, please have your parents transmit my letter to Aachen to you back to Utrecht.

It's raining. The air is quite warm. The season seems to start it's movement to spring. And before I forget to say, I want to tell you , 'Happy Birthday'; it's March 11, is that right?

Recently here in Japan quintuplets (5 babies from a mother at one time) were born. Mass communication is making a fuss of those babies. Everybody seems to say it's an auspicious event. But I don't think so. It's an unlucky event. Each baby's burden of life might be heavier than an ordinary baby, because their birth opposes to the natural law. People who have no responsibilities hypocritically celebrate their birth, but it is merely out of their curiosity. I'm sorry for those quintuplets and their parents. It would have been better that they were not born at all. By the way, why do you think you want your children? I've often heard man say so. I can't understand. My bosom friend (a girl of the same age with mine) loves a man and she said that if there's really an assurance that the marriage life will give her happiness, she would marry but she doesn't want her children; nevertheless her lover said, she said, to her, "You must make a baby exactly like me." She added that she wondered if her lover had never thought of their baby's being a girl.

So I stop here. I really like you.

Namiko

9 March 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letters; one from Aachen and the other from Utrecht. The first one took 9 days to reach me, but the second one was much faster and I received them one by one yesterday and today. So I'm so happy to have your letters with me now. But in your letter from Utrecht you said you were depressed and tired, so it made me quite sad. For, I don't think both of us should be depressed at the same time. It's very painful for me to think that you're now brooding over in a depressed mood in such a distant country. For my part, as I'm always saying I'm depressed and tired, these words sound cheaper. But as I've never heard you say you were ***tired***, it made me very much worried. I hope your present low temper is only due to the reaction to your having spent your happy days celebrating the carnival. And I wish this letter would reach you tomorrow to convey my feelings to you immediately. For in my depression days, your letters are something like a shaft of the sunlight.

And you also said that you think you've lived in vain till now. I feel the same of myself. But I feel there's one difference between us concerning this point. As for me, I really in the truest sense did not do anything meaningful in my life so far; I have just been ***fed*** and ***educated*** by my parents, and what is worse, I, at the age when one should walk one's life by oneself, am still doing nothing reasonable; I'm only bothering others. On the other hand, as far as I understand you, you're always trying to open your own way, even though you may repeat 'trials and errors'. So it may be likely that you are not near, but not far from your would be success. So I believe in your ***fundamental*** strength of your mind. As for me, I've already called myself 'a weak person'. But curiously enough, in my high school days, I used to be regarded as 'a person of strong will'.

Although I won't follow others' opinion easily, I'm a very dependant person, as you know, ashamed to say. By dependant, I mean, in the similar way that a baby asks for its mother instinctively.

The only thing I wish now is that this letter reaches you as soon as possible. Incidentally, thank you very much for your congratulations for my Cambridge result. And never mind your not answering to my questions.

And I hope you'll be successful in your last exam of this month. When you have no exams, I'm happier, too.

I'm now enjoying studying German. It's a little bit easier than French as far as the sounds are concerned. And although the spelling differs greatly from English, some words, such as 'ihr' and 'trinken', have really similar sounds in hearing them.

Whenever I receive your letter, I feel extremely happy, but during the course of reading, I come to fear of finish reading them, because after that I have to wait some more days for your next letter.

It just occurred to my mind that: Aren't you tired with (or ***of -*** which case I don't hope -) me?
The Japanese lady whom you met in front of the telephone box at Somerville (if you still remember) once called me a 'trouble maker'.

So I stop here, hoping you've already recovered from your depression by the time this letter reaches you.

Namiko

Tuesday, 16th March 1976

Dear Hubert,

I'm longing for your letter. I hope you're all right and happy with your university life. I cannot wait for your answer to my last letter, so I write to you know.

Strangely, I began to feel a sort of hesitation in writing to you this time, for I realized that so far I've told you about many, many depressions and worries and complaints of mine, and that it must have given you much pain and discomfort. Nobody would be pleased with hearing others speak of such gloomy things. As this fact occurred to me, I felt some hesitation in writing to you, for I was sure once I begin to write to you my style will tend to be sad. Nevertheless I can't resist writing to you. Please forgive me when my letter gives you any pain.

Just recently, I'm beset with the obsession about the youth. The youth, I fear, passes away so quickly. I'm afraid every day if I'm wasting my youth in the mere useless thoughts and worries. I wish, I could live more lightly or frivolously at least in the youth. I'm afraid to be one more year older next December. I believe youth is beautiful, or at least old age is uglier.

Suddenly it came to my mind when I had dinner today, to die together, you and me. It's an illusion, it might sound quite ridiculous and extraordinary. It's just an impulsive idea of mine, though. And also another extraordinary flash of thought came to me: to kill myself alone solitary on the very next day of my brother's wedding.

But sometimes I really forget about suicide completely, when I feel like living a successful and satisfactory life.

It seems to me that for you, it's something like a taboo to speak of the future. I can understand that it's uncomfortable for you to think of the future. Nevertheless I guess you may sometimes think of it in your own mind. But to make it a complete taboo now seems like being in the place without an exist.

April is the month that every thing begins officially, schools, companies etc. in Japan. So in this period I get restless, thinking what to do myself. I'm sure I'm already a failure of life, for example, I retire this month Notre Dame where I taught for the last one year. But another colleague who is of the same age as me, got the post there after me. Her English ability is not so excellent but she's good at getting on well with the people there, partly because it's her alma mater as well. I retire there voluntarily because I don't like that school and teaching there. It is filled with so much nasty hypocrisy. But by quitting it, I've lost a social position at least in name whereas that colleague got a social position as a teacher.

Anyway I've not yet found a new side job yet. And by the way, the visa which I applied for in last December has not yet delivered.

I have one plan: I'm thinking of being an occasional student in one of the universities around here. but I've not decided it yet. An occasional student will not be bound with any obligations. It'll be a good position for a person to further his study without any intention of getting a degree or qualification. If I am to be an occasional student, still I'll be quite free and I could be in Europe in the summer holiday. But □for the last time, I confirm you: you still really want me to come to Europe? If you've changed your mind in some way or possibly, (I don't want to ask this question, actually; I hope this is the first and the last time to do so) you've met somebody else whom you came to like, tell me so. It's not too late to do so in order

to prevent a greater tragedy in the future. It's not out of my jealousy, but I've always thought there is a possibility that you might meet there in Europe somebody else whom you can get along with without such difficulty as exists between us. For my part, at the moment, there is nobody else whom I came to like except you.

I'm afraid my mental attitude toward our plan has quite retreated from the original plan. I'm still hesitating to go to Europe and spend the summer time with you, though I've saved nearly 500000 Yen. (I don't know the present exchange rate, so I show it in 'Yen') I hesitate because I fear. There're still three more months to wait, though recently time flies away amazingly. But April and May are frivolous months when the air is too warm and the world around me goes easy, and June is the rainy season, dump and gloomy. We've almost passed the hard winter, but the following seasons, I'm sure, will make me quite depressed too.

This again may be a strange letter in some way, but honestly I feel so painful when thinking of you too much in such a distant country from where you're now. I wonder if we're seeking after dream.

I quit here, with my apology if this letter makes you feel uncomfortable in any way.

With best wishes,

Namiko

19th March, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter. I wonder why my heart beats so strongly whenever I open your letters. The process of reading them is something like eating a delicious cake which I'm reluctant to be hasty in eating it up; so I make a pause after reading a couple of paragraphs, breath deeply, and then continue to read.

I'm rejoiced to realize from your last letter that our mental relation, or shall I say, 'solidarity' is much stronger then I have expected. Can you imagine how I'm glad that you really understand my feeling given in my last letter, almost instinctively. But at the same time I awfully regret my last letter in which I wrote a strange thing. I'm really ashamed to have done so, so I wish that letters would be lost on the way to Utrecht; I think right now it's not yet reached you.

Incidentally I went to the travel agency the other day. I postponed my departure date to July 4. That renewed reservation has been confirmed, but one thing which is unfortunate is that the Soviet airplane company decided not to fly the plane to Amsterdam from now till God knows when. So my reserved seat is to ***Paris***. But the agency clerk said that there might be a change and the plane to Amsterdam might be resumed and on the contrary the plane to Paris cancelled. So at the moment I am to land in Paris. If it really comes true, it's a pity. I don't want to be alone in Paris which I'm eager to visit, but which at the same time I fear. So tell me in your next letter what we should do. Will you come to Paris, or shall I spend a couple of days in Paris alone, which I really detest, and then I shall travel to Aachen or Utrecht to meet you. Or on the last days of my stay in Europe, shall we spend some time in Paris, because the plane back to Japan might leave from Paris though I'm not definitely sure? I shall leave Europe when the holiday is over. At the moment the plane's really landing in Paris is not quite sure, but please think yourself of possibilities thinkable in case the plane from Japan must land in Paris. What is unfortunate, moreover, is that the airplane fare has been raised by 60000 Yen. So I think I'll have to be as thrifty as possible during the stay. How much approximately does it cost to travel to Paris and Geneva by train? Anyway my departure date was reserved on July 4, but still, really contradictory enough, I'm hesitating. As a matter of fact, I have an obsession that if I go to Europe this year, I'll never be able to go there again, because it would be two years running.

You told me that the only thing that makes you stay in Utrecht is my wish that you would stay there. It is a little bit an unexpected thing to hear that. It's still that I want you to continue university. I don't deny that it's partly because of getting a worldly fame, a graduate of university. But don't misunderstand me: If you have really something which you desire to do other than study, and if it's quite a reasonable one I mean, quite convincing one, I won't oppose to it. Have you any of that kind? Some time ago you mentioned that if you quit university now, you must go to the military service, which you said you don't like much. It reminds me of my father's case when he was a student. It was the World War II period. He desperately studied in order to enter university, otherwise he would have had to go to the army. He succeeded in entering there, but, as the war got more and more violent, he was summoned to the army, giving up his study, while he was a student. But anyway, I'm sure you'll get something out of your university life beside your academic record, which you would not otherwise get. For me frankly

speaking, it'll be easier if you are working, when it comes to marriage matter. As I told you, I myself felt like quitting my university over and over again. If I had had something which I really wanted to do after quitting it on the way, I would have quitted it. So in your case as well, if you have really found anything else worth doing, and if you don't have to go to the military service you may quit university. In that case I would follow your way of living. But anyway, do you really dislike study?

At home, my brother's wedding is approaching (28th). I get very frequently furious at their way of treating it. Lots of people come to my house, dressed formally, to give us celebration, mostly money, while the couple concerned is always absent. It's the strangest story. Whose wedding is this, indeed?! So I turn to be the wickedest person these days. But to you only, I want to be 'a good girl', in spite of having so many faults.

It's getting warmer and warmer. I imagine spring in Holland is very beautiful. And I love birds to look at. Water birds are really pretty, but I like smaller birds. But do you know a bird exhausts lots of energy for flying? And "Meeuw" is "Seagull", ***nicht wahr***?

Well, just recently I got a letter from Awatif. She got married and now lives in Ireland.

By the way, as for the room during my stay, do you know it's permitted to accommodate an outsider in the room of the student flat, if you get it?

About the British universities I applied for 5 universities anyway; Warwick, Keele, East Anglia, Exeter, Sussex. but I don't expect to go to one of those this year, because my theme has not yet been fixed and it'll need to take much more time.

I'm so glad now, that you're not feeling that bad mentally. But whenever you are out of sorts, tell me. Though in that case it would worry me, I always want to know how you're going actually.

Es ist Freitag, drei Uhr nachmittags. Morgen ist ein Feiertag in Japan. Ich lerne gerne Deutsch, aber diese Sprache ist sehr schwer. Hilf mir bitte! Hoffentlich kannst Du mein Deutsch verstehen!

Auf Wiedersehen!

Namiko

25th March 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you so much for your letter. Can you imagine how it pleased me?

Now, I'm a little bit tipsy, because I drank 'sake' (Japanese alcohol). Today the bride's furniture was brought to our house and our family had to treat them lunch and drinks. It has been so cold in a few days that I feared winter should come again. But at this instant it's quite warm and extremely fine. I feel hot myself, but it's because of the weather or the alcohol's burning in my body, I don't know.

Well, I mentioned that I was hesitating about going to Europe. But as a matter of fact, 'hesitating' is not the suitable word. For my wish fundamentally hasn't changed a bit; I'm craving for your existence. Sometimes this desire or passion is so strong that it almost drives me mad or makes me shed my tears. I'm afraid I've fretted you enough by repeating this word, 'hesitate'. Forgive me, please!!! I had no intention to fret you. As I told you in my last letter, I reserved the airplane seat on July 4. Thus the external preparation for the travel is being made by me. Nevertheless I feel so unstable. Yet, maybe this mental instability of mine made me utter this word: 'hesitate'.

You asked me what I'm afraid of. Well I don't know it exactly myself. I analysed it; one thing is that I've already met others' so many opposing opinions. They crashed me to a great extent. When it comes to this, you may say: 'It's your life. You can do what you want about your life!'

And another possible factor of my instability may be concerning 'the future' in general sense. In the future are included the matter of marriage, what you'll do and what I'll do and what we'll do, and our different nationalities and the possible problems arising from this fact. And what will be going after our rendezvous also makes me uneasy, as I told you several times.

You mentioned about sex. Of course the matter of sex worried me to some extent. But about sex, I'm thinking to leave it to take its natural course, for you once said that it's strange to separate mental and physical love clearly. As I'm totally inexperienced about sex, I've no good idea what'll be going about it, but anyway all I wish now about it is that the sex, if it's performed, would be done as the most natural result of our attachment. Can you imagine, I'm so attached to you that I sometimes feel like even making a child of our own. This feeling is of course a sort of illusion at the moment, and it only comes from a mere fancy.

And I assure you, I didn't even think once that your main purpose is the sexual intercourse. I think I've known quite much till now that you think highly of mentality.

Dear Hubert, I have one favour which I want you to do me: Please don't use the word 'obligation' again. Whenever I hear this word uttered by you, my heart aches, thinking of your sadness you might feel after uttering it.

You also mentioned that my ideas about suicide is so near to yours. But I'm afraid 'my idea' about suicide is not the idea, exactly. It's not formed well. It's ***a sentiment***. It's a primitive desire. The mention of suicide reminds me that in the last couple of days, I fell into quite a strong depression again, and in those days, I was only thinking of death. But when thinking of you in the midst of my brooding over death, I felt so sad and agony.

My mother said, you can do anything if you think you've already been dead.

I quit Notre-Dame, but it's not because of our former plan of April. It's because I hate it and I thought it's no good continue to work there, so you are not responsible at all for this and please don't mind this decision of mine.

And I really appreciate you that you were so kind as to correct my mistake in spelling German 'Herrn'. But I wonder why it must be ***dative*** on the envelope. Neither 'Mr.' nor 'Monsieur' don't become you, I think, when I write them on the envelope. In Japanese we use a certain word to express the respect to the person to whom we write. This word can be used both to male and female.

Lastly I must answer to you about 'my definitely coming to Europe', in some way. Well to choose Yes, or No, it's yes, and I'll arrange other things a couple of months later. So it means that our rendezvous on July 4th is 'quite a fixed plan'. But you know, please understand my extreme instability of mind. But if I hesitate, it's only because of various mental delicate reasons and absolutely not because I came to be indifferent to you. On the contrary I only live with the image of you. How I wish I were with you right now!

I'm so glad that you're recovered your happy feeling now. Before you, I can throw away almost all the self consciousness without reason. Now I almost feel like praying to the Lord (I prefer the word ***Lord*** to ***God***) to let us be united on this earth.

Namiko

April 6, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter. I'm glad that you're again in a good mood. When you're depressed, it makes me all the more depressed.

Once I get drunk, I lose almost all the self control of mine. But I think that's when the true self itself is exposed. But for that terrible hangover, I feel like drinking every day every night. When I'm drunk, the world, the people around me look completely changed; they look nothing and I feel absolutely superior to them.

Maybe I did too much ask about your future. I'm sure that in your mind you are all the time thinking of it. But do you really mean not to plan anything concerning the future? Just to think of it makes me very uncomfortable, too.

As for a child I suppose your opinion has changed in some way, which in a sense I welcome. For before, I had thought you were very eager to have one or two... I'm afraid my very negative opinion concerning this point influenced yours in some way.

I've so far heard quite often about your strong wish to be free. But have you ever thought that when you're completely free just like I am now, can you manage the absolute freedom? When you are put in such a situation, you might do something that'll be trivial or meaningless just like I'm now doing. You may end up by being defeated by terrible ennui. Human beings cannot endure absolute freedom. Nevertheless I can in a way understand your opinion about freedom, because I myself have after all the same opinion, though there's a difference between us: in my case I deny everything that I hate because it may endanger my being free.

About the subject of sexual intercourse, I don't want to refer to it anymore, but I still can't help referring to it only a little bit more. First of all, the word, 'disagreeable' sounds so strong and it gave me a slight shock. For in that word is contained no mentality at all. I think it quite natural for me to be afraid of it in a sense, because it's a completely new realm of experience which is not happening with me yet.

Before I die ***young***, I want to throw away my virginity, because it has been for long my burden. On the page of my diary is written as follows:

"5/5/'75 - It is a little better to wait and wait for the appearance of a lover aimlessly than to be raped by a sexual abnormality."

Do you really think that I seem to escape from it? But it's not my pet aversion. At one time in the past I had an illusion: I'd pay as much money as I can afford to a person who would take my virginity, if only he is very tender and absolutely obedient and giving me no physical pain, and yet is technically skilful with the intercourse. But this crazy illusion disappeared completely shortly after that.

Oh, I've quite wasted the page by writing about those nonsense.

Dear Hubert, it's so painful beyond endurance that you'll be absent from April 13 to May 5 and it's not known where you are and I'll not be able to get a letter from you regularly. It's so cruel. Please try to be in Aachen as long as possible, please!!!

When I began to write this letter, I was in such a low temper that I thought of not writing now. But by writing so far I feel quite better.

Nevertheless I feel as if I were an important person to do anything. What is worse, it's raining now. Rain makes me all the more depressed. You once said that you like to walk in the rain. It's unbelievable to do that in this gloomy season. It's something like the end of the world.

I am tired. I'm thinking of seeing a specialist of nervous diseases, but I don't think, he can cure me by any means, maybe I won't go. I want ***potassium cyanide*** (medicine of a violent poison).

A week or so ago, I went to one of my aunt's. There was her daughter (my cousin) and her child. And the mother fed her child (2 or 3 years old) ***castella*** (sponge-cake) and the way the child snatched it away and ate it in a monkey-like way was really funny. The Japanese way of bringing up children is really spoiling, and I am a typical product of that method.

Do you know the word meaning the opposite meaning of 'hypocrisy'? Recently I have been called this by three persons; a type of a person who tries to look or have an air of being wicked.

These days the life is not interesting at all. I only descend lower and lower into the abyss where a devil of nihilism grins.

I feel so painful and sad when it occurs to me that I'm not worthy of you at all. I fear whenever I face with you, I try to be hypocritical. Sometimes my parents say, "How come you can't be more normal because you have received a good education?" But in my case education deteriorated my character.

So coming to the end of the page, please promise me to write at least one a week wherever you are during your Easter holiday. And also tell your landlord my best regards, please.

Good-bye for now

Namiko

April 13, 1976

Dear Hubert,

I was a little surprised to know that my tape was damaged. And I must apologize you because I imagine you may have been somewhat disappointed because you could not hear from me. In fact in that tape I spoke a lot. But at the same time I'm in a way glad that the tape was broken (though I still don't understand why it's broken), because it was very unnatural to do so. But anyway please try to understand my very lonely feelings which I had at that time. But as I told you, I'll never do that again. And I mean to compensate for that damaged tape by writing this letter to you. But the pity is, it's not sure that you'll get this letter in time, because you are on holiday from today.

By the way is your new room not in a student hostel? Or did you feel so impatient with your landlord that you couldn't wait till you got another room?

Well, in that tape, I asked you, you won't pick me up in Paris if I land there because of your exams or because you don't like Paris at all or because you don't want to waste money on such a thing.
I said, I'll pay my food and travel expenses (if we really travel), during my stay, because if you spend too much money during summer holiday, I fear you'll starve next semester. So I asked you to tell me the concrete monetary amount of food expected to be necessary, on the condition that I won't be luxurious. And I regarded travelling as being not necessarily important. As to accommodation, I won't demand 'my own room' insistently, though I still have a sort of vague fear.

And I said your last letter (now, the letter before the last) was very business like and doesn't me itself so much, I mean to receive your letter is still a joyful thing, what kind of letter it may be.

And I said my visa has not yet been delivered; the authority must have neglected us. And from Monsieur Morino, I haven't got a second answer from him. I imagine he's quite busy now because his family comes to France this month.

I think these are the main things as far as I remember; the rest of the tape consists of my ridiculous murmurs, nonsense and complaints. I really am so sorry to have barred once the flow of our letters by sending you a tape.

I'm not sure if you'll forgive me or not if I say the following ... Well, in that tape I said I tried to choke myself once or twice recently. But the pain was so intense that at the moment I realized I would die if I continue in this way, I quit the deed.

Well I think I wrote something about freedom in my last letter. But after having written I came to realize that I had no right to speak of it to you, because the recent process of my life is exactly the escapes and escapes from restrictions. So now I'm almost free in my own inner world. But now it's almost impossible or very difficult at least, for me to come back to the world of restrictions again, unless something very forcible happens.

I have one thing which I must tell you. I rather think it quite early to do so, and I'm very unwilling to do so, because it would make you sad or discouraged. But please listen, bearing it in mind that it's not yet sure. Well the thing is, if I'm admitted into a British university (University of Warwick), I □must again postpone my departure from Japan until the end of August or September, because I'll have to prepare till those months in Japan, otherwise it's quite likely that I won't get a good result from studying there. And if I spend an easy life more than 2

months with you in Europe, I won't be able to switch to the study later. I expect that the university will inform me of whether they accept me or not within this month. I hope they won't. So please tell me if it comes true, you can still wait until September. I'm really very sorry to ask such a question, but if I study in England, I shall stay at least for two years in Europe, and during that period I think we can have a time together during holidays. It's still a mere plan. But this is one solution to what I'm going to do after our meeting.

But concerning this matter, I have a very great (for me) worry: in that case I'll have to have my parents finance me, spend a huge amount of money on me - ***me*** who I think is unworthy for it. And what is worse, if they do so, I'll be robbed of 'my right to die', because I'll feel responsible and I won't be able to give them a great shock by killing myself. It would be a great burden after getting through the study there.

Maybe I shouldn't have spoken about this matter, but as you well know, it's so painful to write to you, hiding the things possibly happening.

Recently I talked about sex with mother, and I got a great shock when she pointed out my thinness. She said, "there's scarcely flesh around your belly and bottom, you'll pain your partner during the intercourse because of your bony body."

A couple of days ago, I came to the following decision concerning my sister in law and her family:

- to keep silent about them
- to avoid referring to them in front of my family instead of speaking ill of them and
- to be harmless to them

This sounds very negative but this was the only solution that I found. I felt awfully ashamed of my mean attitude. But since they'll continue to live in that way which makes me feel unbearable, I want to defend myself by doing so.

By the way, recently I felt the strong necessity to move my body and I began to make physical exercises, jumping with or without a rope as well as cycling. And I realized it's a very good thing to make my body active. It somewhat releases my depressed mood.

But as far as my nerves are concerned, the only thing that can really make them less intolerable is alcohol. At night I'm induced to take it.

Only by chance, I came to know that the German pronunciation of your name is ***'hu:bert***, but I've pronounced it like'hju:bert' as if it's spelling would be something like ***Jubert***. And that mistaken pronounciation is what makes that mixture between English and German. So should I call you ***'hju:bert*** as if your name would be an English one? But why isn't your name ***Hubert***, which I have been familiar with. I'm afraid, I'm getting too confused about the pronunciation of German and after all: Well now, I'm a little bit tipsy, because I took a couple of beers at dinner.

Now I began to concentrate on the books by Virginia Woolf, these days. Her actual life was much more interesting than her novels. In her life she suffered nervous breakdowns many times and attempted suicide a couple of times. If it had not been for her husband, she would have put an end to life much earlier. Her husband advised that she should not bear her own children. And the reference book says that they (Virginia and her husband) were equal partners in their married life.

I remember one more thing which I mentioned in the tape: I'm afraid I changed in someway since last summer because many things happened since then. Before that I had never worried about things with another person.

Well dear Hubert, I hope your new room pleases you better than the last one, and I also hope you'll have a nice time during your holidays.

And I apologize once again for that tape. Today it was quite warm, and even if it's chilly, there's no longer that terrible coldness of winter. I'm quite all right now, and I'll continue my physical practices.

I hope to hear from you soon. (But there'll be a strike of mail service here in Japan on the 20th, 23rd and 24th. It's a great pity)

So Good-bye,

Namiko

April 21, 1976

Dear Hubert,

I imagine you're now enjoying your holiday. I wish to have your letter written during your holiday, because such a letter is always so nice.

I'm now quite all right because of my mental and physical efforts. By mental effort, I mean to try not to complain and devote my time instead to reading; by physical effort, I mean to practice gymnastics in my garden, and I found out that physical practice gives me some refreshing pleasantness. Thus I'm preventing myself from falling into depression. Nevertheless I feel lonely and find my present life quite unsatisfactory. In the first place, I have now no institution or any sort of social group to belong to. These days almost everyday I keep myself indoors, simply because there's no place to go to. Even walking along the street is quite unpleasant because the air is very foul for the car exhausts. And I have no what call holiday; everyday is like a holiday to me.

When I heard from you that my tape had been broken, I felt some string of my heart also snapped.

Almost everyday I'm learning German. But recently it's getting quite hard; the grammar in which the word form changes according to case and gender is so difficult. And some words are too long for me to pronounce smoothly. But someday when I get the better command of German, I'd like to read Nietzsche's work.

The other day I went to the art gallery to see the exhibition of art in East Germany. There were pictures, sculptures and prints. They are the works of realism in 1919 1933. I felt almost all the works there showed a sort of weird or appalling sense. the whole impression was quite strong on me, but I felt quite disgusted and I didn't like them very much.

Recently I come to understand better what you said one; our ideas are quite similar. But to put it another harsher way, it might follow that both of us (I'm sorry if I give you offence by 'both of us') are "eternally a child". I mean, I think to enter the world of adults, we're required to be more conventional, more secular and more hypocritical. At least I think myself still a child in a sense.

Mother referred to my present life as a sort of luxury. Maybe to the eyes of many people it is. People work to live, but I wonder what they live for. It would be better to live only in the present as you seem to be able to do so sometimes. I wish I could do so, too. But always so far my life has seemed to be a kind of preparation for something in the future. Even now it seems so. But I've stopped to seek for 'the absolute purpose' of life.

This letter may be not so interesting, I'm afraid. But I could not help writing, I'm happy it's already a real spring, for the last winter was quite hard mentally.

Bye-Bye For Now,
Namiko

April 26, 1976

Dear Hubert,

I hope you're well and enjoying your life where you are now. I'm getting a little bit irritated by not hearing from you for quite a while. Maybe my previous letters didn't reach you in time partly because you were on holiday and partly because there was a mail service strike here in Japan recently.

Well, today I received a telephone call from the Kobe Dutch Consulate. They're asking you to go to the Municipal Census registrar and ask them to give you a certificate proving that ***the city*** has no objection to our marrying. Without this certificate, my visa for entering Holland won't be granted.

Considering the matter, I don't think we'll need visa any more. So should I cancel it altogether, how do you think? Though I've not yet confirmed, there isn't a tourist visa, I think, for it is quite unlikely, as far as I've heard once somewhere, that a visa valid for a year is given to a tourist. But I didn't tell the consulate officer that we had changed our former plan. So could you suggest me how to answer to the consulate?

I send the same letter as this one to Aachen in case you're there at the end of your holidays. The consulate asked me to present that paper as soon as possible, anyway.

So dear Hubert, please write to me soon!

Namiko

27th April, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very, very much for your two letters. Can you believe again? that your letter dated 13th reached me today; it took two weeks. And I also got your letter of 17th. I wonder why the post office can't be so kind as to deliver them separately! As a matter of fact it was very, very painful for me to endure your three weeks' silence. And I'm ashamed to have suspected if you changed your mind. I don't want to be a jealous person, but you know, since we're in a so distant place, such a blank period makes me very much anxious, though you'd warned me earlier that during your holidays, your letter from Holland would be delayed. So now I understand you were so busy.

Well, now I'm writing to you over a bottle of beer. Though I was filled with joyous feelings because of your letters all day today, I sometimes really can't endure my present life recently. Tomorrow my brother and his wife are coming back home, and I'm sure this is the biggest reason for my depression. Unfortunately indeed, the aftermath of their wedding is not yet finished; it's a custom here for a bride to come back to her parents' house shortly after a wedding.

But don't worry, I seldom drink too deep. Only a small amount of alcohol will do for me. Anyway I can't stand my present life without a drop of alcohol and cigarettes. This, I think, proves that the life has been getting harsher and harsher to stand compared with that of my college days.

You said in your letter that you can't afford to travel. That's O.K. with me. I don't mind very much because all I want to do is see you, though it's only a little bit disappointing, because I had somehow dreamt of walking together with you along the streets of Paris. But I still want to see a bit of Paris, so I may stay there one or two days. But I wonder how you spent that amount of money for your furniture; 2000 DM is quite an amount of money, it seems to me.

I've not yet received an answer from the British university. Even if I'm admitted, it's not yet sure I'll really accept it. Another two more months to wait seems to me very painful. If I'm not admitted, I'll go to Holland on July 4. In that case maybe I won't change my plan any more, because I desire to see you.

So in this letter I can't yet tell you when I'll be in Europe, if admitted. I feel now a very complicated feeling. Even if either case comes true, it has its drawback: If I'm admitted, I must wait more, if not, my stay there in Europe will be short, two months or so.

Since I like Germany very much, I imagine it'll be very nice to see some places there, anyway.

I'm glad doubly after reading your letter; you're now in a very good mood, and your new flat satisfied you very much; you needn't get into trouble any more with your landlord. But I wonder what kind of feeling it is to live always in that high floor.

As for suicide, it's not electricity but ***choking*** that I chose as a means. You said you felt my tendency to that got stronger since I went back to Japan. It may seem so, or during my stay in Europe, my tendency was much more theoretical in spite of our talks about suicide. I don't know if you believe it or not, but while I was there, I could feel life more vividly and I can say that I was very much enlightened by you concerning the idea of life itself. But once I came back to Japan, to my too ordinary living condition, that enlightenment I got has been

fading day by day. If I don't live at my parents' house, I imagine it is more likely for me to kill myself, for when living alone, it may be more likely. And I think life after death is nothing at least ***for me*** who is dead.

As for my brother and his wife, I really fell annoyed, though I still try to refrain from complaining about them. As long as they're distant away, it's quite O.K. But their appearance tomorrow must disturb my peace. It seems to my eyes that every act of their life is a ceremony and they're the slaves of conventions, and what is worse, they themselves are not aware of that at all. Their marriage is something like a marriage not of two individuals, but of two homes. For example before the wedding, our family received a lot of felicitations in terms of money and articles. And in order to return the courtesy, the bride and my mother will visit around the people who gave them celebrations and introduce herself and give them articles in return. And when the bride goes to her parents' house, my parents also accompany her and my brother. Moreover, as they can't support their new life by themselves, my parents give them some amount of money regularly and the bride's parents will also help them in some way, financially. So you can see it's the marriage of two families. It may seem to you unbelievable, but it's very common custom here. I myself can't endure these obviously too ridiculous things, and I call myself a ***rebel*** against conventions. But to be a rebel is sometimes very hard, because the people around me can hardly understand me properly.

On the night when their wedding was over, I met a man at my house. He is a friend of my brother and he attended the ceremony and he stayed that night at my house. When I got home, very, very drunk, that night, he was there talking with my parents as a guest. It was absolutely by accident that he was there. But as I was drunk very much, I began to talk and curse to him violently. He seemed to be amused by my sudden unusual appearance. That was our first encounter. As it was interesting for me to talk with him, on a later day, we had a date. We drunk quite a lot then, and at night we went to a little hotel and we performed a sexual intercourse. But he hesitated quite a lot before doing it and even in the midst of it, he didn't complete the deed because he feared that I should be pregnant and because the image of my brother, his friend, flickered; meanwhile, I was very drunk and almost all my ordinary nerves were paralysed, so I felt neither pleasure nor mortification. I just felt only a sharp physical pain, because he was very, very awkward.

I know all these confession of mine is very bitter and disagreeable and disgusting to you, but I dare confess everything to you, otherwise my conscience will torment me forever. If you can't forgive me for this act of mine, you can refuse me. But I was very lonely and I had seldom got relaxation or dissipation, so I had a date with him. But from the beginning I was not serious with him and on parting with him, I said to him, I break off our relation definitely for this once. I don't deny it's quite amusing first to talk with him, but there are two ideas of his which I can't by any means accept; that is of suicide and marriage. He seeks to establish a very steady home of his own and he can't understand my idea about suicide at all.

Even if you offer to break off the relation with me, there's one thing which I want you to remember. Don't think I'm obscene by nature. I still think I'm of you, if you allow me so to say. I wanted to free myself from being a virgin. But now I'm not sure exactly if I'm a virgin or not. I think myself 'a half virgin', for my organ didn't bleed at all, strangely, during the intercourse. But I don't think I could free myself to my satisfaction. Anyway all these are facts, I was very reluctant to

tell you about this, but it's my principle. And I had feared the result that would be caused, to go to a faraway country in order merely to have an intercourse.
I want to believe that our relation is sound enough not to be blurred by the physical matter. So I have now, almost no tremendous obsession about sexual intercourse. According to that experience of mine, it was almost nothing to make a fuss about. But don't think I'm frivolous, nor think it disgusting for me to try to excuse myself. I'm even now very serious. After all I can't love that man. You are the person who can tell me the life itself not at all in a sophisticated way. If you refuse me for this incident, I'll lose two persons at a time. But I think the relation without a lie is better than that with a 'beautiful' lie. You know, before I hear your answer or reaction to this, I'll be definitely very worried. Even my parents don't know about this, naturally. Even after this, I don't think I've changed. I think I'm almost the same as before. I want to hear your frank opinion about this. I'm prepared to stand whatever you say, however bitter it may be. You know, nobody is hurt deeply yet. Even if you refuse me, I won't resume the relation with that man. This is all what I can say now. I really hope this will not give you a great shock. When I read your letter today, I was really happy and thankful because you didn't change a bit and you were as sincere as ever.

One thing that I regret about that incident is only your being hurt. But I myself try not to blame myself as being not moral. It has been a long time's virtue here in Japan to keep virginity until getting married. But I think it very dangerous to get married without knowing the body of a partner, because a physical inequality is a misfortune for any matrimonial life.

The feeling which I had toward him is completely different from that toward you. The latter is spontaneous and instinctive definitely. As a matter of fact I fear that the situation which occurs in Hardy's novel ***Tess of D'Urberville,*** in which Angel Clair refused Tess immediately after she confessed to him that she was once raped and gave birth to a child, also occurs to me.

Dear Hubert, I'm sorry to end this letter by those unpleasant remarks. But I have no intention to be controversial about that matter. I just want to be accepted by you as before.

I can't find any suitable words to conclude this letter now as usual. But I'm not so depressed now. I think I'm now very calm. And I hope you'll enjoy the rest of your holidays.

Namiko

May 6, 1976

Dear Hubert,

I hope you've adapted yourself to your college life again.

For my part, every moment is a kind of agony; I can say so without exaggeration. One day suddenly I got to be so worried what'll become of me if you get so angry and declare to break off our relation because of my folly with another man. Just to think of it is so painful to me that I cannot help but burst into crying, for I had tried to keep your memory as pure and holy as possible.

It's something like a blur on a clean sheet. For me all of your previous letters are so precious; it's like a symbol of Platonic love. If I get desperate and grieve a lot, it's not the breaking off itself but the fact that I stained our pure love, if I may call it so. But it's not necessarily that I simply regret what I've done; I wanted to free myself from being a virgin as I told you. It's no use crying over spilt milk. Only I'm not sure of myself at all. And I despair of coming to like the other sex. It's so painful to fall in love. (I do not love that man.) Now I don't see anything in the future, to borrow your words in one of your letters.

If I were to marry that man, which is the last thing for me to do, I'll be a prisoner of a home, for the form of marriage which he means is a kind of castle in which he is a master and can relax with his family. His ideal for a wife is to be obedient like a doll. As a matter of fact he said, "I think I can marry you if you wish to do so."

But of course I don't wish for such a form of life. But the problem is, I am not at all satisfied with the life with my parents. In a way I hate them in spite of my natural love toward them as their child. If we spend the time together during the summer, I'll go back to Japan afterwards only to find the life with them totally unsatisfactory. But I'm very unwilling to ask them to give money which enables me to study in England for two years, at least, because I hate them, because they are not very rich, because I think myself unworthy of it. So I don't know what to do, though if you don't refuse me, if I'm not admitted into the university, I only want to see you in July. For I think we waited a lot and we endured a lot. (By the way the plane is still bound for Paris, unfortunately. And as for visa foreigners can stay in every country of Europe without a visa up for three months.) Sorry to refer to the business like matter. I intended to have you forgive me. My heart aches, my conscious aches. In a couple of days my depression was all the better, because it was mingled with irritation. (Please tell me your new telephone number in Utrecht.)

You once said that on the one hand you're seeking for a home where someone is waiting for you, on the other you think a home or marriage unfree because you want to be completely free. Now I can quite well see your point.

To see my sister in law, I think how domestic she is and wonder how she can be happy and content with such a life, a complete housewife, though she's still so young.

I really do not want to survive any more, though some people regard such an opinion as a luxury. It's a wonder to see other people living, doing and repeating the daily jobs of each. For me, now I can't spend even a single minute without feeling a sort of agony.

I feel myself utterly of no use to the society. I hate everything connected with society. I hate my family. I've lost any interest in the objects around me.

When I think of you, I come not to know how to think of you properly. What are you to me? I'm afraid you'll be a victim of an outlet of my deep frustration which I feel in my daily life here in Japan.

But one thing that I want to tell you by all means is that it was such a joy and the proper object of my gratitude that you came to like me. I am so vague and weak and nothing. Adults laugh at my rather childish way of cherishing my affection to you, but now I'm not defeated by such a ridicule; now that I suffered all the more because of that blur dropped by my folly, I'm full of decision to cherish my invariable affection to you for my part, whatever opinion you'll come to have toward me.

So dear Hubert, please understand me.

Yours,

Namiko

7th May, 1976

Dear Hubert,

What a nice letter you gave me! It was full of tenderness. And from that letter I can see you're really in high spirits. But I'm afraid that was until you read my last letter of confusion. I can't write to you now without feeling a pang of my conscience for the folly I told you before. I have no intention to dare to do that sort of thing once more as long as our relation is lasting. I feel as if I were a criminal waiting to hear a sentence declared by the judge. I fear very much if which of your letters becomes the last letter to me in any time. I can't imagine now in what kind of mental condition you're now, so it is likely that if I send my picture again to you in the traditional Japanese style, ***kimono***, it may mean that I'm shameless now that your heart would leave me. But I dare send it to you, because I wanted long to send it to you.

I wrote to you yesterday, full of anxiety. Today I felt half relieved and half bewildered to have your letter.

I'm now beginning to think to cancel the permission from the British university even if I'm permitted. (It's not yet informed me.) Instead I feel like flying up to you in July, forgetting every nasty thing hand just resigning myself to the moment of happiness. If after all I choose to die sooner or later, it would be better, it seems to me. But this is not my last decision yet, and I feel very sorry to you that I can't specify the date absolutely. Please forgive me if you get irritated by not being able to plan in detail what to do in your summer vacation. (The reservation of the plane seat for Paris is still secured.)

Well, now, I'll have one thing confirmed because you seem to begin to doubt my wish to go to Holland. I still definitely want to see you! If you don't mind. If you do mind now after knowing that bloody fact, my statement might sound very hollow and meaningless, though.

I was extremely glad when you stated that our meeting would be more than just a change for me. This statement sounds so convincing and so sound that it encourages me a lot. You told me that your view of life was a little changed in that life needs a certain kind of plan. But ironically indeed I've already been influenced enough by your former view of life; it's ridiculous to plan one's life; the life won't follow one's plan. But the scope of your influence is happening only in my mind, and I'm still unable not to stick to the plan to quite an extent.

By the way, do you remember that bloody professor who hurt me a lot one time in the past? Well, I saw him twice since he hurt me badly, because I can't deny him completely. And very disagreeable enough, he still threatens me that I'll be disillusioned after seeing you. But you know, now I do not mind what he says that much, because I regard him as an old and very conventional person in a way. Besides, his opinion was against our ***former*** plan. It shouldn't be that I'm too susceptibly affected by him, though for my part I can't have any absolute confidence that I won't be disillusioned at all. But anyway I'm trying to do my best to disperse any illusion of you from my mind and I just want to preserve my ***simple*** affection to you. I believe that simple affection is one of the surest things among all the human vague emotions.

Since last October, it has been always you which was the centre of my consciousness. And apart from that, after returning to Japan, I decided to try to live more humanly, to try to think highly of the human life itself. So in February, which

is the end of the academic year in Japan, I didn't take the exam of postgraduate course here in Japan, because I thought the world confined to books and studies seem to deprive the ordinary human life of the normal human feelings somehow. So I meant to work somehow, but could not find any temporal job suitable for my taste. So from April I haven't been working except two hours a week tutoring three girls. (But you aren't responsible for my not finding a job.) Though in February or March I said I would find a temporal job and work, I'm ashamed to say I have no courage to do what is called 'a trivial job' such as waitress, etc. That's my nature. But it's not quite true that I despise that sort of job. Only I myself can't do that. Well since October, it seems that you lead at least outwardly a reasonable and progressive life, while me, I wonder what I've been doing since then. Still now I'm reading English novels chiefly. If I put myself in a student publicly, I'll have to feel guilty of myself, because the more I study, the more stubborn I seem to get, in spite of the time and fee for the school. But I allow myself for studying by myself, for it disturbs nobody and I don't see any point to be denounced by others as far as I do it secretly and privately. But do you see the point? This opinion of mine may seem a little strange, and very negative, though. (By the way it sounds so depressing that your exams will start again!)

As for the conversation with my parents, it's being stopped for the time being. It's quite long since I stopped resuming the topic concerning you, as a matter of fact. Now in the past several days I hardly speak to them, because I feel very indignant to them, and they also seem to be angry with me to some extent, mainly because of my bad attitude which I took toward my sister in law while she was staying at my house. You know, in Japan the family relation is so rigid that I'm forced to have the feeling both of lone and of hatred to them. But meanwhile I'll talk with them about the subjects, but I think there's no room for them to oppose to what I'm going to do, at least positively, only if I make it sure to take the responsibility for my deed and do it at my own risk. (Oh, I wish I wasn't born as a Japanese!)

Concerning the visa, I've not yet confirmed that foreigners can stay in Holland for three months without a visa, but by tourist visa do you mean that I'll use it after the period of three months without a visa, or do you think a tourist visa is necessary just from the beginning of entering Holland?

About your postcard, I've safely received it some days ago. Thank you very much.

Today, I made a little excursion with a friend of mine. We visited a botanic garden and walked along the river. It was very fine and the wind was so pleasant and the whole day was quite refreshing. But now I'm a little tired of course physically and I can understand that physical fatigue is in a sense quite agreeable.

So coming to the end of this letter, I want to ask you once more to understand me as I am, though it's very difficult to understand another person, even oneself. Though it may seem disagreeable persisting for me to resume the topic of that folly, I just want to say another word; please say to me that you don't mind that misbehaviour of mine so much. I'll be truly delighted if I can hear from you these words.

Sometimes I really get suspicious to what extent indeed I do understand you. I believe there's a lot to remain to be known about our mutual personalities.

So I stop here, hoping you won't declare the shocking sentence to me.

With love,

Namiko

11th May 1976

Dear Hubert,

I could not read your letter without feeling a pain, not because it gave me a shock, but because on the contrary you are too tender and too generous. While reading that, I couldn't stop weeping and trembling for some minutes.

You said you can't imagine that I was able to do such a thing to an unknown man. From this remark of yours I can now see that I've been now 'a fallen idol' or 'a broken image' to you. I suppose that maybe you thought I would be the last person to do such a thing. To see objectively from the point of view of the third person, it may follow that I had been pretending to be innocent before you, though the word 'innocent' sounds a little vague. And I came to realize from that bitter experience of mine that the sexual intercourse is not of the first importance, and I can be also convinced why lots of people here in Japan get married on the system of the arranged marriage without having the physical intercourse beforehand. (My brother and my sister in law had been a virgin before their marriage.) Now that I've got a sort of experience, I can understand the intercourse not being the first importance, but I couldn't regard it as not so important without any experience, from the beginning. (It seems to me that simply for that experience it cost me a lot spiritually.)

I had thought it a matter of course ideal to confirm the spiritual love by making the physical love. It's true that I wanted you to be the first (and the last) man to know me both spiritually and physically. But since the nature of our love has been purely Platonic, maybe I feared the gap between them which I'll have to face when meeting you. If I were to regret what I've done, it's only because of you.

I was amazed at your insight that it was me who encouraged him to do that. If the situation had been the other way round, these would have been a sort of salvation. But I admit the fact frankly and bitterly, though it can't be denied that he was not without any intention.

You think that the loneliness cannot be the reason to go to bed with him. It's true, my loneliness could not disappear by that event. But the loneliness which I feel is rooted far deeper in my mind. Maybe it's almost equal to the solitude of an individual. And this solitude, I think will never be gone from me. Its nature is that it cannot be solved by the presence of others, whatever confidence and affection I may have toward them. And I think most pessimistically that it'll be almost impossible for me to feel the sense of being united with anybody even through the physical intercourse. Thus I am not sure what to do with myself.

It's true that in Oxford on that bench it was almost unbelievable for me when you said you could enjoy your life sometimes. I remember that in that moment you said you were happy. So in Oxford I couldn't yet see that you also sometimes become negative and depressed. But now when you say you're in high spirits or you perceive the existence of beautiful moments, I also can feel glad in a sense. Because then I come to feel like believing in the beautiful aspects of life, too.

And please do not try to imagine me with that man. I've never met him since then and I've suggested him to put an end to our short relation. But it's not true that we made quarrels, nor have an ill feeling toward each other. I don't blame him at all. I'm just thinking to take all the responsibility, if there is any, to myself only, for what I've done. And I don't think he'll tell my brother about that. Even if

he does, I won't mind, so I'm deciding, because I said I'll take all the responsibilities by myself and it's the matter only between me and him, and because my brother has no right to accuse me. (He'll only feel sorry if he knows the truth.) Nobody knows about this except you among the third persons. My brother is getting very worried about what I'm going to do with the future. But now he can't help me at all. I must throw away the idea of the ordinary happiness, the home, if I choose to be honest to myself. I can't by any means choose such an easy way as my sister in law chose. For her all the rails of her life was set and she's going to trod on that rail without thinking much, being deceived blindly by the customs and conventions and what they call the common sense.
So in these circumstances I'm almost completely to myself and thinking and suffering alone which may turn out to be meaningless.

I vaguely think that once something is cracked, it can't be undone exactly the same as before. But I think that to experience anything cannot sometimes avoid something of what one has been being cracked. (This isn't an excuse.) Maybe that fact and the image of that man will remain in your mind till God knows when. Though you may think it useless to suffer, I'll take all the agony to myself; there's no other way. So please disconnect the image of that man from me, though the fact is the fact.

As you know, I am unusually uncertain, I'm drifting and drifting. The more I think of life, the more I am dissuaded from living on. You know, I'm thinking my present age is very precious and beautiful. I don't want the time to go on to add one ugliness of age after another. I wish to stop it as beautifully as possible before it gets too late. This is only my wish, as you know.

In these days, time is passing away extremely fast, while I'm spending it vainly. Really you're the only person who can hear my depressing feelings to me satisfaction. I can be satisfied and consoled to a great extent just by your hearing about them. And I'm so appreciated that you wrote me such a nice and convincing letter in the midst of your present busy life.

Generally speaking, my ways of thinking and living are very different when being in Japan from when being in a foreign country. When I'm in Japan, I'm affected by the way the people around me do, and when I'm in a foreign country I'm even more affected and influenced by the people there. Since I came back to Japan, the influence which I got over there was so strong that I come to repel every Japanese object. But there in a foreign land, I had to feel the very sharp sense of alienation. So at present I have no sound spiritual home.

And about the human relation, it's also quite different. The feeling which I have toward you is completely different from that toward that man. Many of us, the Japanese have more or less a feeling of longing for the Europeans. And I think myself too, not exceptional in this respect. Maybe it is in this point that the elders around me regard my affection toward you as dangerous if it is going too far. Besides, in your nature language, you can almost completely express yourself, whereas between foreigners there does exist a limitation of language, though according to Mr Morino, the language does exist simply because one can communicate with others by it. On the other hand, the feeling which I'm holding toward you can be, as I told you, very pure, compared to that toward the tame Japanese. And I don't want by any means to lose this feeling toward you. I believe that our present relation can be counted as a beautiful thing in life.

I'm very glad that you don't seem to get angry, at least outwardly, for what I've done. Nevertheless I'm a sort of guilty person by the judgement of

another me inside me. As a matter of fact to put myself in such a situation doesn't go with my principle or taste. But I'll have to stand this natural consequences of my own deed. It seems to me that I'm making the matters of life more complicated by my hand. But I repeat again that I got no pleasure from that very deed. Nevertheless I'm afraid the Fate could be cruel enough to make me pregnant, though this possibility is quite rare, I hope.

I'm really frightfully sorry to make this letter very disagreeable.

As to Paris, I don't generally like the large cities themselves, but if I can walk with you, the place comes not to matter at all. That what I meant, when I wrote about that. But you've already given me lots of bad images of Paris! Is that as bad as London?

By the way haven't you any sister?

So I stop here hoping the good luck in your examinations. I'm going to write to you as often as I've been doing.

With my love,

Namiko

17th May, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you so much for your letter. The way of your speaking in your last letter sounds so convincing and reasonable. I think you're quite right. As a matter of fact, I began to think of trying the exam of postgraduate course here in Japan in next February. But there's no assurance that I would pass. And the exam makes unusually nervous. Especially shortly before it and after some period in which the result is not known and in the limitless period when the result is a failure. (A couple of weeks before I took the Cambridge exam, my stomach was upset, and a week before the result was told I felt terribly ill, couldn't sit up. But curiously enough, I can be very calm during the exam itself.) I've not definitely decided whether I would take the exam or not, but I'll think more about that, while at the same time I continue to study by myself.

Your opinion, or a general theory, make me free, I can understand. But even if I get a master's degree here in Japan, it's very unlikely that I'll be able to be satisfied with the job, though it's commonly believed that a job and a hobby can't go with each other.

In your last letter you used the word 'friend' for the first time. From that and other things as well, I began to feel that you seem to try to help me, or pity me, who is something like a 'stray sheep'. But I think you have no duty of helping me. (Forgive me if such a way of speaking gives you an offence.) In fact I'm very glad that there's such a person who thinks of me so much in such a distant place. It's almost unbelievable. I only feel very sorry to disturb you so frequently. It's more than six years since I began to think of suicide. And I must admit I haven't made any progress in this aspect in these years. It's absolutely sure that it's one form of escaping from life. A couple of people once said that I seem to try to seek too much in life, and my wish of death is the immediate disappointment with the reality. It may be so.

When I was in my early girlhood, I thought, "I want to live even if I'm dead." (Though it has nothing to do with the idea of the world after life.)

Generally you seem to dislike England. In what aspects do you think so?

I'm so glad that you seem to come to be steadier both in life and in your opinion toward it. It may be that you're on the point of being mentally mature, or you had been already mature enough, I don't know which.

The answer from the University of Warwick has not come yet.

Anyway I want to see you.

I'm now very desperate. Whatever I see around me, I'm too easily led to weep. I have an obsession of losing everything, including you. By the unknown power I'm forced to see every possible worst. But sometimes when I walk along the street and see flowers, for example, I'm overcome with its beauty. The present season is too beautiful for me to endure.

As for the visa, I confirmed that a foreigner can stay for three months without a visa. And I offered to cancel the marriage visa, but since the officer said that I must start from the very beginning next time if I cancel it. So he said he'll reserve it for the time being, and I said, I will ask them what to do when the matter is definitely settled. So it can be cancelled at any time if I wish to do so.

When I got your letter today, I was very happy because you said your letter would be delayed during your exam period and I didn't expect to get it so early.

By the way, ***Gare de l'Este***, is that the right station in Paris from which the train to Aachen departs?

Indeed you're the only source of my encouragement. Then I wonder why my heart aches so much. I'm seized by the consciousness that I've fallen. (One of the motives of my folly is the seeking of mere pleasure.)

I'll conclude this gloomy letter by telling you once again my longing for you is all the same, or increased much more.

Namiko

P.S.
In my address you wrote, 'Agaru', the postman seemed to be puzzled by taking the first letter for 'S'. 'Sagaru' means 'to the south' and 'Agaru' means 'to the north'. He must think it 'Sagaru' wrongly. Anyway it reached me safely, fortunately.

20th May, 1976

Dear Hubert,

I received your kindest (this adjective may sound quite strange here) letter this afternoon. I can scarcely find any suitable words to think you for your deepest solicitude for me.

Most likely I won't kill myself for the time being in spite of my quite strong wish of death. Fortunately or unfortunately I'm not courageous enough to carry it out immediately after that wish fills me. But as you know I may be a 'would be suicide'. Perhaps suicide will be my real aim of life. But when it will take place nobody knows: at 30, 40, or 50. (Virginia Woolf did it at 59.)

To know that I'm the cause to shadow your present happy life, I felt really sorry and wished to write to you more cheerful things. To make you sad because of me also makes me sad. Really I wish to be one of the sources of your happy feeling, rather than that of your sad feeling. Maybe in writing to you, I was inclined to show my darker or darkest side of my life. But sometimes I can feel lighter and les unhappy, realizing I can be in this state only sometimes only because I am living. (Being dead, the body becomes colder than a stone. I can imagine that, because my feet are quite often very cold as if they belonged to a dead person's body.)

Anyway, how egoistical of me to have shown you mostly the darker side of myself.

"DO SOMETHING", "FIGHT", "CHANGE FROM ONE TO ANOTHER" That's what you, and most people, mean to say? Yes, I know I must do something which is connected in one way or other with the society. My favourite saying; Something is better than nothing. but the question is, it is very difficult to do something ***meaningful***, do something both to my satisfaction and to others'. I don't dislike to study, but I wonder what's the use of studying in a social sense. (After studying to a certain degree, you can teach juniors, which may contribute to the development of the community you belong to.) Is that all? It shouldn't be so. Don't get angry, but I vaguely think, whatever I may do something as long as I live would merely be a temporal dissipation of my deeply sorted pessimism. You insist, and I also think, that to get independent is necessary. To get independent means to live by oneself. To live by oneself will be very hard. To fight against the very hard life, without knowing its meaning I'd rather give it up, rather than to do so. But still all these are purely theoretical.

I sometimes don't know if I really want to die. For when I tried to choke myself some time ago, I tried to tear away vinyl bag as hard as I could because the pain was in its extreme. If I had really wanted to die at that time, I would have endured that pain. This proves that I may not want to die then, that I thought it was still too early to die. So please don't take my wish of death too seriously; the wish is one thing and the act is another. It may be that I still desire to live; I might think so in a small corner of my mind. I only beg you to forgive me for my egoism of continuing to speak of suicide. It's only you to whom I can speak like this.

It's almost like a dream a couple of weeks when we spent them together. Do you remember the time when I kicked off an empty can and it sounded terribly in the hushed up air of the night when we strolled about the street?

I think I can forget almost all my present misery if I can be with you. You have such a kind of spell: to paralyse the real mental pain of mine.

You said one day is too short and you have so many things you want to do. I can understand this in a way, because there was once such a time for me: to study to enter the university. At that time that idea occupied me hour after hour, day after day, year after year for three years. But when it finished, I found it quite meaningless.

Anyway I can see your point. What you call 'artificial aim' is necessary for me at present. I may prepare myself with the exam next February; I must rewrite a dissertation of 25 pages in English for that. But the University of Warwick hasn't given me an answer. So at this very moment it's not sure how the matter will go.

I hope I won't always shadow your present life. Imagine that sometimes I'm having a peace of mind for a moment. Really I want to give you a joy, rather than a sadness. I'm just all right. So don't exclusively worry. I'll manage somehow, getting spirits from you. As I told you, I am really glad when you're in high spirits. Then I can really rely on you mentally, if you allow me to do so. And I hope you won't fall into a depression in one of these days. And please don't jump down from the 16th floor! (The ideal height is 7th or 8th, so believed)

And I'd like here once again to thank you for your tender and serious concern for me.

I wish you a good luck in your exams. You must fight again with them, mustn't you? Damn the exams!

Namiko

P.S.
Sometimes I am under an impulse to have you within the reach of my arms here and now.

Saturday 22nd May, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Can you still be happy when it is raining?
Can you still ... when you are sleepy?
When your head aches?
When you tramples down a cockroach under your foot?
When your body is dull because of the heat?
When trees are bare and landscape barren in winter?
When I'm crying calling your name?
Still, do you mean to go on living?

But I saw through you
A flicker of happiness, a piece of belief
In the existence of beauty in this world.
(But don't laugh at my sentimentality If I write in this way.)

For those who do, time is short.
For those who think, time unbearably long.
(I've read this somewhere.)

But let us not generalize things too much. Then, what is life? Is it a forbidden question? You say there might be something, which I may miss if I die now. But what do you answer if I say: I've already found an unfailing joy in you, and I'm quite content with it - don't want anything else. And I don't wish to damage it to any degree by surviving?

A doubt is cleared; I'm not pregnant. I do not mean to share my body any more with another man until I marry, if I ever do. Now I'm barely out of that terrible obsession of sexual intercourse.

Every word of yours is very lucid, which I like very much. Yet you seem to analyse life as if to handle mathematics. The second stage between birth and death, is, you say, important and difficult. But you seem to have already the full abilities to go through the way, find the way, or even create a way. I'm sure you can do it, because you seem to have affirmed its process a little positively or rather negatively. I, vagueness itself and no wonder that you get confused with what I am thinking. But here let me be allowed to point out one thing in which you also seem a little bit contradictory; you said your life consists of a certain amount of imaginations. Yet you once insisted on your not being disillusioned when you see me. You can't say that; there's still more room into which intrudes the devil of disillusion. (But I'm not sticking to the subject of disillusion that much any more.)

Thank you very much for your last letter, which made me think much of the subjects there. As you know, I've been very much complicated and distracted this month (it's not solely because of the season, of course). So I think my last several

letters were uncertain enough to startle you from time to time. Sometimes it seems you get more hold of me than I do of myself.

I had thought Platonic love could be sufficed by the exchange of letters. Maybe what I had been thinking was like this: I had wanted to go to Europe to see you partly because I wanted to see you out of my affection to you and partly because I wanted to have a physical sensation because you were there. But now, it's quite different; I want to go there purely because I want to see you. (But please don't misunderstand me: my former motive was not impure; the desire to see you had been the same as now. Only I could not well distinguish the ideas of mental and physical love, then.) Honestly, even now, I'm not developed enough to fully understand their relation.

If even still now you can feel something for my existence itself after all those blunders and idle course of the matters of my side, I'm really so glad. You know, I have been thinking very hard what our relation really means. For I had never so fully committed myself to the relation with others. Therefore maybe, I think, every reaction of mine to you has been sometimes quite strange so far.

Through hearing your ideas, I have really met with some quite unexpectedness which had been totally new to my former realm of thinking. For example I think there are a very few Japanese male fiancés (Do you remember, I ***was*** your ***official*** fiancée?!) who encourages their partners so earnestly and so eagerly to fight and to be independent as you do: Though this generalization is not so authentic.)

Anyway I think I am all right and won't fall again into that awful confusion as far as sexual intercourse is concerned. I thought myself to be supposed to be chaste. But I just experimented at my risk. I think it was a dangerous play, because women are disadvantageous in that they'll be pregnant as a result. (If I were a man, I would make more "experiments", maybe.) But don't think me as a sexual crazy. I feel it's quite opposite; I am very timid by nature and I had been brought up in quite a stoical circumstance. (Don't you think you're leading a stoical life now? For exams make people stoical to some extent.

Incidentally one of the reasons why I hate any exam it that I think any other person has a proper right to ***test*** me!)

I'd like to apologize to you here to have fallen you into disagreeableness concerning my folly and so many arguments about the sexual matter. And I'll try to stop overvaluing it for the time being. If I did so too often in the past, please forgive me. At least I've known a little better as for this matter than before. You know, it's said that there are three main human desires: appetite, sleep, and sexual desire. Maybe I had thought that if I did omit the last one, it was something like a sort of deformity. (By the way, I heard that my sister in law has been already pregnant.)

Isn't it one of the reasons for your not caring much about sexual intercourse that you chose the wrong or unsuitable partners?

As for your theory of "substitution", I'd replace the word "substitution" with "dissipation" or "distraction". Though I think ***substitution*** sounds more positive.

Do you really expect much in life?

What is it that you really want to do in life?

Do you already know that?

I believe one of the tasks of literature is to untie this abstractness of life. But I'm afraid that if I continue to study it, I should make it all the more abstract.

Just at the moment I'm quite all right; I'm not desperately depressed; I've just been out of a sort of nightmare. But I'm still very, very uncertain mentally. I wonder when I can ever be certain. I'm very thankful for you to react firmly to whatever I write to you.

By the way, did you get my letter dated 7th, this month? For I'm complicated about what I wrote in each letter this month.

The other day, a baby cat was mewing just outside my house. The other day a couple of azaleas (a name of a flower) opened their petals in the shadow and they were wet with raindrops yesterday. Both of them are signs of this season.

I wish your happiness will last as long as possible.

Namiko

May 27, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter of 21st.

There were two points which I felt quite harsh or too real in it: Firstly, your honest feeling of not desiring physical love that much anymore. For my part as well, now the physical affair is not my first important problem. There is still a more important problem for me, and that's my mental problem. Partly thanks to your opinion about that matter, and partly owing to my recent ***experiment***, I'm not so obsessed with the idea of sexual intercourse in general as I was before. Therefore your statement about that matter doesn't affect my wish to come to Europe.

The second point sounds far more severe for me than the first one: I have no right to commit suicide because I'm not independent of other people! It is too severe, all the severer because it was uttered by ***you***. I heard other persons say almost the same thing, but then I could laugh them off, concluding they would have no courage of even attempting it. I thought you were the last person to speak in that way concerning this matter. (However the last sentence is not the angry statement!) In general, I think that having right or no right, one would die when he or she thinks it necessary. If you think committing suicide neither good nor bad, it's strange to say that one person has a right and another hasn't. If you allow me to make an extreme argument, it follows that I'll try to get independent in order to get the right to die and then to commit suicide actually. Anyway this is strange. But for me the problem is as follows; I've not yet had a conviction that it's better to survive anyway than to die here and now. Whatever I do or think, wherever I am, this idea bothers me and prevents me from attempting something new. For example when I think of marriage seriously, this idea disturbs me greatly and makes me wonder, why is it necessary for me to marry, me who is wishing to die voluntarily sooner or later. Likewise, I ask myself, why is it worth while to spend a lot of money on fees for me who is going to die?
This obsession is something like a spill and if only it breaks, I think I can live more positively and willingly. But I think it almost impossible.

Life itself oppresses me beyond my endurance. But I can't decide to die right now, because I may wish to live unconsciously.
Don't laugh at me, but I think I am a person who needs formulas and solid rails of life on the one hand, and on the other a person who struggles to get out of them. When I see and feel life oppresses me, choke me, make me cry, I get completely desperate. And it is in such a moment that I feel a human being is absolutely solitary and I wonder if I can share this bitterest feeling with another person. Maybe everybody has such a moment more or less, but I think myself to have it more frequently then others. As you told, a busy person has no time to think whether he is happy or unhappy, and I think you are one of them, sometimes.

When I said in one of my letters that you seem to pity me, I did not mean that I thought you write to me out of that feeling. It's nothing but an intuition. I write to you simply because I want to do so.

I'm extremely irritated because the University of Warwick hasn't answered me while the day of departure is approaching day by day. I think myself too, that the life in England will be too hard for me to face it. So I don't think I should go there on that purpose. but the problem is, it has been my long dream to

study abroad more than a year, and if I'm admitted (I'd rather hope I won't be), I'll have to hesitate a lot, because it'll mean to throw away or not to throw away a chance.
But anyway, my wish is more keyed to seeing you on July 4th than that of going to England to study.

According to the present schedule, the plane arrives in Paris at 21:40, July 4. And I intend to stay one night at Paris, because I'll be very tired from the air journey. (Do you think I should reserve a hotel? For it'll be difficult to find a lodging place at night in a foreign country which I've never been in.)

I've been hit upon another obsession again that I can't cope with the solitary air journey to Europe. Don't laugh. On land, it's easier), but on the sea and in the air, it's terrible. For example if I fall into an appendicitis in the air, ...

Recently I started reading Franz Kafka's book.

I hope you'll thinking out the alternative for what you'll do during summer vacation if I don't come. I really hope you will enjoy the summer vacation in any case, because summer seems to be the best season in Europe, and after your hard college life.

I wish you good luck in your exams and also please take care of your teeth!

Namiko

P.S.
While you lodge me in your parents' house, I'll pay the cost of foods. And please ask their consent with that condition.

May 29, 1976

Dear Hubert,

I'm getting much frightened at the thought of being alone at night at the airport in Paris. It may seem a ridiculous worry to your eyes, but it's serious for me. Couldn't you really come to pick me up there? If you say it's expensive, I'll pay the train fare for you. If I can't manage the thing at the foreign airport all by myself, it may mean that I can't train myself. But I'm tormented by the obsession that what shall I do if I feel so sick as not to move there. It'll be night (around 10:00 maybe), and besides, I've never been to Paris. If it's London or one of German cities, it'll be a little easier. I have very little confidence in making myself understood in my poor French. I know I must do it myself, but I fancy what a relief it'll be if you come to pick me up. Another worry is that since I heard that Paris has the most whore houses among the world big cities, I imagine Paris is more dangerous and terrifying than London. In London I could walk alone at night without feeling so much fear. But when it comes to Paris, it's an utterly alien place and only French is spoken, and moreover Latin people cannot be much trusted. (Maybe this is a prejudice.) I'm worrying if I can safely reach a hotel in the city of Paris. I'm not sure if I can reserve a hotel beforehand here in Japan, and I'm not sure if a hotel will accept a customer late at night even with a reservation.

I hope all those worries will turn out to be groundless after all, but at the moment, I can't help getting absolutely anxious. Now I fear Paris indeed. You may think it strange that I, who said over and over again that I want to die, do fear such a trivial thing to such an extent. It may be all right to die then and there in a foreign country, but it'll be beyond endurance to suffer while living.

Really I come to think that I am a person out of question concerning going to a foreign country alone, because I feel I even can't do such a thing. The group trip is really very easy. Other people take care of the travellers quite well.

I imagine you might say you won't come to pick me up for the sake of myself in a broader perspective. But I want to ask you, is Paris ***safe*** like London. (Though it might not be safe everywhere in London.)

Sometimes it is the mass of human beings that I fear, while it is other human beings that can help one when one is left in the lurch.

Since this journey was out of my free will, I can ***never say die*** to anybody except to you.

I believe you can hear me, whatever nonsense I may say. As you know, there's something morbid in my nerves. It has been like this from my childhood. When I was a junior high school student, once I refused to go to school for three days, because at that time there was to take place a school trip in which I had to participate, but I feared to do so, because I was afraid of getting ill on the way and because in those days, I could eat little in the company of others. (After all I participated in that trip, suffered on the way both physically and mentally to a certain extent, but returned home, overcoming myself.) Always, an idea of physical sickness threatens me. I've overcome some of neurotic habits, such as washing hands persistently, to some extent, but I can't still overcome that obsession.

When I started writing this letter, I felt terribly desperate, but now I feel a little easier, curiously. But that obsession haunts me at an unknown moment incessantly.

Now at this very moment comes it again. This time, "what shall I do if I get ill on the previous day of my departure?"

Though the Warwick hasn't answered me yet, I have half a mind to refuse even if I'm admitted.

Be sure to ask a consent to your parents concerning accommodating me for two months at the largest, please.

The longing for seeing you is increasing day by day. I'm absurdly sentimental these days.

Namiko

May 31, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you so much for your two letters. Both of them were really so nice. Of course I'm very glad when you fall into such an extremely jovial mood. Nevertheless it seems almost incredible to me. I think it's one of your gifts to be able to relax in the midst of the strain of life.

Maybe I've planted an impression in your mind that I'm always 'bad tempered'. But this word is too loose and sounds bad. There are so many colours of mind which are summed up by that word: sad, depressed, gloomy, despondent, impatient, worried, angry, etc. And in my opinion the bad temper is nothing but a superficial phenomenon of the mix-up of some the those elements. My mother always seems to regard me as being angry when I'm sad, when I'm silent, when I feel sick, when I'm irritated. So don't imagine that I'm always 'bad tempered' when you imagine me. (When you imagine me at 8 o'clock in the morning, I'm sleeping!)

Recently I'm getting restless at the thought of 'another five weeks'. And your letters make me all the more restless, because it sounds that you're calling me, beckoning me. I'm full of fears if some obstacle appears and hinders my path during this period.

About the aim of life, I think, too, that some aim, whether it's temporary, is absolutely necessary in order to keep me active. But what it matters to me is, as I told you, that I've not decided to live until the natural death. I can't decide it by any means, but if I can, I think I'll be able to be more positive toward everything. Therefore my old theory: the ultimate aim of my life is suicide. I can understand, though just theoretically, what you mean to say: do something anyway in the direction of some aim which suits one, and since there's no hereafter, it's better to live on than to die right now. But that theory of mine is, I think, my incurable disease. I just can't accept life as it is. I can't endure the way life flows away in only one direction which is death. When I find 'a knack of life', it might be easier to live. Do you really think that I'll find it to make life less unbearable some day if I make an effort? I wish someone would freeze my habit of thinking and worrying!

One of my grandmothers, too, didn't do anything meaningful except giving birth to children. She had three sons, but since she herself was physically very weak, tow of them died when they were children. And she even didn't perform the duty of bringing up the only son remained who is my father, because she was weak. She only bothered other people even for the matter of her own child. Nevertheless they (the people in general) seem to go on saying it's all right to make children. But I don't forgive her (she's still alive, 73). She should have been dead much earlier before she got married!

My present life is full of vanity or nothingness. (This isn't a complaint!) I wish I could replace this vanity with ***intensity***!

From your last two letters, I can really feel vividly that you're, or were, 'carried away by May'. But of course, as I told you before, I like that style of your writing then, very much. To be honest, you can't still cheer me up directly, but you can do so to some extent ***indirectly***, though I always appreciate your letters themselves.

I think I have an unlucky nature that even in the midst of being carried away, I would fear to lose it the next moment, and therefore I think I'm always

despondent, more or less as if I'm in a ***limbo***. I was told by others, and I think myself too, that my sense of self defence is too strong. It's absolutely true.

I wish I could have written you more cheerful things. Forgive me for my having written so many sad letters in the last several months!

As for tape, I don't mind that you didn't send yours. For since you gave me your photo, it's more than enough. Seeing your picture, it seems you yourself is speaking to me. That picture is very well taken, and I don't think you've changed since last summer. (As for Kimono, it's true that it's immobile, but that's what the ancient people intended in order to make women inactive, gentle and obedient. Inside, the body is fastened by so many strings and it was quite tiring for me to wear it, because it was the first and the last time.)

About the place when we'll meet first, do you mean to fix it to Utrecht even if your exams will be over in June? ***Ça m'est égal***, but if your exams end in June and if you don't come to pick me up at the airport, I prefer the nearer place from Paris. In any case could you tell me in detail about the timetable, fare, and the kind (express, etc.) of trains to the destination? (Is Aachen 'Aix la Chapelle'?) I still wish to see Paris with you even for a day or two.

I appreciate your two letters and happy spirits. May your writing two letters a day happens more than once a year!

Namiko

June 1st, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter. It was a pleasure to receive your letters successively from yesterday. Your letter contained a complicated argument. Although I had said there was a contradiction in your statement about imagination and disillusionment, I didn't mean to accuse you. Maybe you can accept whatever is to come in life and you don't fear being disillusioned. I think it's right, isn't it? To be able to do so is, I think, a great thing and I just admire you in this respect. Then I imagine even when you fall into depression, it'll be a sort of mental reaction to something which precedes it. But mine isn't that, as you well know. My depression is already chronic, and a second habit. To cure it, there's no other way than to be reborn, which of course I don't want. (Incidentally I found a fascinating phrase in Kafka's book: ***The Revolution of the Body.*** I wish it would happen with me some day. Kafka's book is quite disagreeable to me, but there's something which attracts me.)

As a means of self defence against disillusion, I make it a rule to be pessimistic. Before you point out, I know what a ridiculous life I'm leading. But as far as our meeting is concerned, I no longer fear being disillusioned. I don't think I'll be so, for my only wish is to see you and then, I want to stop time. (This doesn't mean suicide necessarily.)

I still think life is akin to an unsolvable equation in that it is enigmatic.

By the stoical life I meant in general. I said that, I was hardly conscious of sexual contact. In my high school days, I almost affirmed the stoical life which I had led and I used to despise the lazy students. It was only when I was a junior or a senior at college that I suddenly came to detest stoicism bitterly. From then, I began to drink and to smoke, I stopped forcing myself to rigidly planned study. I wanted, and I still do, pleasure. But maybe the best way is to go in between the two, to keep balance. (It's easy to say!) (Life is nothing but a product of compromise, resignation; in life to be safe one has to choose the medium.)

I've come to think sexual life is a nuisance for me; It'll be better for me not to do, rather than to worry about being pregnant afterward. I think I won't need it for the time being. But don't think I've flown from one extreme to another. I'm so occupied with other things that I can't think of sexual life now.

These 'other things' are mostly practical and connected with my journey for Europe. Today I went to the travel agency to find that there might be a plane to Amsterdam. They'll tell me definitely two or three days later. If I can land in Amsterdam, will you come to pick me up? It'll be July 4, 21:30. And if I am to arrive in Paris (Charles de Gaulle), I get very worried if I can safely arrive at a hotel somewhere in and around the city, because I read in a guide book that the taxi drivers at the Paris airport are untrustworthy. There's another way: if you stay in Utrecht until July 5th, I can fly to Amsterdam from Paris next day. Maybe this is the second best thing, I think, though I must pay more for the airplane to Amsterdam. But the fault is in the Soviet Airplane company. They are so uncertain and change quickly. (If I hadn't visit the travel agency, the plane would have still been to Paris.)

By the way, what does TEE mean? Is it a general name of European luxurious international trains? The problem of those international trains is that according to the guide book, they are not punctual at all.

Considering the safer and easier way, I rather want to land in Amsterdam. The day will be July 4th, at night, or 5th, before evening, maybe. If it's Amsterdam, you can of course come to greet me, can't you? (YOU MUST!)

In Utrecht are you sure to accommodate me? And in Aachen don't your parents oppose to accommodate me long, I can shorten my stay in Europe to one month, though I myself want to stay there as long as the circumstances permit me.

I haven't got an answer from Warwick yet.

About Paris, is the city divided by number, such as 1er, 2me, 3e ...?

In case of emergency I may send you a telegram when the departure date is drawing near. But I hope we can exchange the details of my arrival in letters much earlier than the departure date. There might be a possibility that the plane to Amsterdam disappears shortly before the very day of departure. Anyway I want to settle the matter of plane, hotel, everything that I have to do before I see you.

May your exams not fall on 4th or 5th, July! I imagine you're quite busy now with your exams. I wish you a good luck in them.

I read the book "***L'étranger***" by Albert Camus a long time ago and I detested him then. But I want to read him again soon, (in order to get used to the sense of disagreeableness!)

Recently I also read in translation of Goethe's "Werther " (Can you guess this?). I read it when I was a high school student first, but I reread it because I wanted to see the mind of the man crazy for love.

With best wishes,

Namiko

P.S. (1)

Can't you, by any means, afford to stay in Paris for a day or two? Please make my dream to walk with you in Paris come true somehow. If you insist you can't absolutely, I'm thinking to stay a day in Paris alone. For I may not be able to see it in my life if I miss this chance.

P.S. (2)

Don't take the beginning of my last letter (May 22) too seriously!

June 7, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your two letters in one envelope.

As for my previous remark about your alternative plan of the summer vacation, you are misunderstanding me; I had said about that in order to prevent the result which will come when I can't come to Europe. I had felt sorry if I would damage your beautiful summer by not fulfilling our former plan.
I wonder how you came upon a word, 'cynical' about my remark. And that had nothing to do with a threat. On the contrary, my wish is one and the same: I want to see you by all means this summer! If there should be the case when I can't come, it'll be when I fall ill suddenly and unexpectedly. About the University of Warwick, I'm going to write a letter of decline, though the answer hasn't come yet (How slow the way the English do things is!)

And I'm so glad to hear that you'll come to Paris to pick me up. As for the plane, although I wrote in my last letter that there might be a plane to Amsterdam, it turned out that at the moment the planes don't fly to Amsterdam and that there will be ***hardly*** any possibility that the plane to Amsterdam is to be resumed by July 4th. So as far as it is known at the moment, the plane which I'll take is ***Aeroflot*** (I'm not sure of the spelling, but it's the Soviet Union airplane), ***flight 576***, leaves Tokyo at 13:00, July 4 and arrives in ***Paris 21:35, July 4***. The airport is ***Charles de Gaulle***. Shall I reserve our hotel? In this case, the sooner, the better. Or will you reserve some lodging place from there? Or are we not going to stay in Paris at all? (I, for one, would like to stay there a day or too, as I told you already.)

About the length of my stay, don't you mind if I stay until the beginning of September? You once said that you may have to work some weeks in vacation. Is that still necessary? If so, I may reserve the plane seat back home beforehand or I may leave it open. I've not decided on this yet.

I'm really grateful to you, because you've promised me to come to Paris to pick me up. Can you imagine how I'm feeling relieved?

As to your student flat, isn't it prohibited to accommodate an outsider? I associate your student flat with something official where so many rules are established. I hope it's not a strict place.

I'm getting nervous, exciting and restless, though I know I must relax. At one time I feel too weak and at another I feel quite all right. I'm quite all right physically, but my mental condition is very uncertain. You told me that the human instinct works strongly in the bad conditions, but I'm not sure if that instinct works well with me too. I hope it'll do.

With your statement about suicide, it's not altogether true that I'm angry. I said it's too ***crue***l. And my awareness to fight against the world is still too faint as you well know. But one thing that I absolutely believe important is to overcome myself, though it's very hard. I think I've spoilt myself a lot already. When I regard life as a succession of fights, I feel awed and am robbed myself of course of courage and vigour.

I sometimes imagine your late brother, if you allow me to refer to him. I wonder if it's when one sees through things that one knows his or her own death approaching.

I'm often seized by a nameless horror which I don't know how to cope with.

There's one thing I must tell: apart from my longing for suicide, you have changed my way of thinking slightly maybe to a positive direction. Maybe something is beginning to move inside me. But unfortunately my fundamental ***negativism*** still remains with me.

I wish you a good luck in your exams. By the time this letter reaches you your exams will have been reduced to three.
Hope to hear from you soon.

Namiko

June 11, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letters (4th, 5th).I'm now feeling weak mostly mentally again. And so your hard view of life, 'struggle for nothing' sounds so strong that it is short of my present mood. I'm losing courage of surviving. As I already told you, I have a nameless primitive fear, which I can't analyse. You said that we can only live in the present, but since the present must be connected with both past and future, I feel myself oppressed by past and future from two different directions.

But don't think I'm particularly depressed now. My temper circles round and round. Maybe I'm getting extremely nervous before a long journey, and I can't tell anybody this weak feeling, because I planned it out of my free will.

I wonder why I continue to fall down as you once put it. When I start a thing, I always feel myself quite unable in the beginning. I wish I would meet with you without that terrible long, uncomfortable journey.

It's a pity that your parents are opposing to accommodating me. Then I want to know its reasons.

Although I had said that my plane would be likely to land in Amsterdam in my letter (May 1), is has turned out after my several inquiries that the plane will ***most likely*** land in Paris. It's almost definitely. The plane of the Soviet Union (Aeroflot), ***Flight 576*** arrives in ***Paris/Charles de Gaulle***, ***21:35, July 4***. It may happen that the plane will be delayed in arriving.
When I arrive in Paris, I still do want to stay ***one night*** in there, because I don't think I can stand the long train journey after the stiff air journey. After being in the air for a long time, I imagine I'll long for an ***unmovable*** bed on earth! So will you please find a cheap lodging for us? If we stay at a youth hostel, I think I must get a membership card or something beforehand.

Having written so far, I recovered a little vigour now. It's always so; writing to you has such a magical power.

At the moment, the climate here in Japan is very unpleasant. It's a rainy season. Sometimes it's too damp and hot, and sometimes it's quite chilly. It's unhealthy indeed.

By the way I wrote a letter to the University of Warwick to the effect that I want to withdraw my application. So I haven't to worry about that any more.

About the travel insurance, foreign currency or cheques and the luggage, I'll make sure all right.

Please forgive me for this letter being shorter than usual. I wish you a good luck in the rest of your exams. And now I want to apologize you for having annoyed you a lot for a long time because the things hadn't settled easily. Now I can say, I will fly to you an July 4!

Namiko

P.S.
If possible, will you send your answer by ESPRESS?

June 14, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your several 'single' letters in one envelope. How nice of you to have written to me almost every day. But it's not true that I didn't write to you 'for a long time'. There was only 5 days' absence.

You may wonder what I'm doing in these days. Well, it's quite an inactive life as before. What is worse, I can't concentrate on reading now.
There are ***still*** or ***only*** three weeks left before departure. I'm getting more and more restless. But since I strongly desire to let our long dream come true, I've decided to get through the rest of my days here in Japan. I promise you that I won't collapse fatally before seeing you, though occasional ripples of depression are inevitable with me. I made up my mind to stop smoking for the time being in order to take care of my throat. I don't drink now, either. And I try to sleep well and eat well. So you see I'm leading quite a healthy life.

It seems to me that you're imagining too much again. Five single letters must be its definite proof. But can you imagine how I'm fond of that style of your writing? It looks so carefree and gives me a great encouragement.

It may be sometimes quite hot in Holland as you said you already swam. All my life I had few chances to swim a lot in summer. I can't swim more than 10 meters. But anyway, before you mentioned about swimming suit in today's letter, I had packed my swimming suit but I had been thinking of not taking it. But I will, after all.

According to a man at the travel bureau, my plane, Aeroflot Soviet Airlines has a bad service. I don't expect much service, but clean air and a bearable, reclining seat are all I want. If the plane crashes, the expenses for a dead person's family to come to the spot of the accident will not be paid for. I don't like the plane journey at all. I even fear it. But the actual flight hours will be 14 hours or so, I think, and so I think I can manage it anyhow. If it happens that I don't take the plane No. 576, I'm sure to send you a telegram as soon as I can beforehand. Otherwise you can assume that I was on board that plane. I hope my plane won't be hijacked!

About the return ticket, I asked to book it as you told me. It leaves Paris for Tokyo, but if it cannot be booked, I'll leave it open. And the date of my leaving Europe will be ***September 13, Monday, 12:50***, if its booked. I also asked them to make a hotel reservation at the centre of Paris. The reservation is not yet got; it's now under examination. But the hotel cost is quite expensive. First they offered a 40 Dollars hotel, twin room, but I said it's too expensive and asked them to find a cheaper one. They are now finding about Dollar 27 class hotel. But they said it doesn't face the main street and the facilities and the atmosphere are not so good. Anyway it takes a couple of days before to know if the reservation was made. And I asked one night on July 4. If you can, will you please try to ***survey*** a cheaper one at the same time? In any case I'll pay the cost needed for the stay in Paris.

Let me explain my financial situation. I earned about 600000 Yen and I'll pay 365150 Yen for ticket and insurance. We can have up to about 450000 Yen in foreign currency. I'm thinking to take that maximum amount of money with me for security. (Of course I'll use traveller's cheque.) I'll borrow about 230000 Yen from my parents but I hope I won't use that borrowed money; I want to manage within the limit of my own money.

If I rent a room in your flat, I think I still can manage it with my money somehow, but I've not made up my mind on this point. I think a certain degree of privacy will be good, otherwise it may happen that I'll make you bored with me to death! But on the second thought, if I don't use 300 Guilders for room, we can spend on other use, for example, a small trip. So do you think I can rent it after my arrival there if I come to want a room?

I'm so glad to hear that Holland is such a liberal country and the flat doesn't refuse outsiders.

It's a pity that you failed in one exam. But as far as I know, it's the first time of your failure since you came to Utrecht, is that right? I wonder what's the subject. And I'm quite surprised how soon the results of exams are known. And also I imagine it's quite a torture for you to concentrate on reading and studying in the midst of heat. But when you get too hot, you can jump into the water!

The present season here in Japan is very gloomy. But I think it's better in a way to have rain, rather than to be extremely dry like in England now.

If I were you and failed in one out of all the exams, I would regret and regret limitlessly, because I'm a sort of 'perfectionist'. I hope you'll forget that mortification, if you still feel, at least during the vacation.

And again, about a room in your flat, I imagine some students are leaving home during the holidays and so it'll be easier to get one.

Although it seems that you're thinking that our journey begins exactly at the same time, it's not so, though it's a lovely idea. I leave my home about 6:00 a.m. July 4, and in your time it's 22:00 July 3. And 13:00 4th is your 5:00 in the morning. So when you start your journey, I'll be already on the plane, maybe sleeping, maybe eating, maybe walking around!

I hope you'll be able to concentrate on your study, and hope to hear a good result soon.

With love

Namiko

Saturday morning, Juni 19, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you so much for your letter by express. You seem to feel suspicious why I sent that letter by express. Well, for one thing, of course I wanted to send it as quickly as possible. But at the same time, I wanted to know how long it takes to get an answer when both of us send letters by express. Anyway it has turned out that sending by express is a little faster than the ordinary mail.

I got an airplane ticket and also I could reserve a hotel. It's not cheap, but I accepted it because our reserved room is secured all through the night of July 4 and we'll be accepted whenever we arrive at the hotel. The address is:

Hotel Arc Elysée
45 rue Washington
75 Paris 8eme

TEL 359 51 74

It costs ***F. 140*** including breakfast and tax. It's a twin room; I felt a little reluctant to reserve a twin room, as a matter of fact, but partly because of saving money and partly because it's for rest and in the same room we can talk & talk into midnight (if I am awake!), I reserved a twin room. I hope it'll become a wonderful night in Paris, but I imagine there'll be quite a few Japanese tourists, because some of its rooms are already secured for the Japanese by Business Consultants Japan, Ltd. So if we don't stay at the reserved hotel, the company or the hotel demands a penalty to the travel bureau through which I reserved the hotel.

I'm reading some guide pamphlets of Paris and of Amsterdam. It seems that there're too many things for sightseeing in Paris. Our hotel is, I think, quite near the ***Arc de Triomphe***. Have you ever been to ***Montmartre***? Once I saw it on T.V. and I'm a little interested in it. But is it a mere amusing centre? And Amsterdam is, the guide book says, a picturesque city. I also saw a beautiful canal picture of Amsterdam. And what made me pleased a lot is the fact that English is very well spoken and understood in Holland. (Incidentally which language do your parents use most frequently?)

About the time and place of the arrival, there's hardly any change. But the time table says ***SU (Soviet Union = Aeroflot) 576*** arrives in Paris at ***21:40***. The airport is ***Charles de Gaulle***; since I confirmed it twice, I think there's no mistake. (What's complicated it that the airport differs according to the date of the flight even in one airplane company. Some aircrafts of Aeroflot arrive in ***Orly*** and some in ***Charles de Gaulle***.)

Another two weeks!
Since I stopped smoking, I'm in quite a good physical condition these days. But I'm too restless to go to sleep easily. Maybe on the previous night of my departure, I won't sleep at all.

When I appear at the arriving gate, it'll be most likely that I look too exhausted. So don't expect me a cheerful face!

Today my mother said: "Come back home as a virgin!" And this made me feel sad and mixed, but at the same time irritated. I'm sad because I'm cheating her, but I'm irritated because it's none of her business. Do you think that simply

because I'm still dependant, she has a right to interfere with that privacy of mine? I know they're worrying, but their worry makes me even more nervous.

I hope you'll succeed in your last exam.

I've seen twice a fatamorgana of you on the street since last year.

Mysticism is better than any religion.

Namiko

P.S.
How do you say "Hello" in German?

Kyoto, Sep. 14, 1976

Dear Hubert,

I arrived home safely at about 16:00 today. It is now about 8:30 in the evening. I'm now writing to you, listening to that tape which you recorded. It's quite well recorded (or my machine is so nice?). But unfortunately there's no sound in the side 2.

I saw your last letter of June which I couldn't get before my departure. To see this letter makes me so sad, because everything is over now. I'm not sure if I can really stand the loss of you.

Well, about the travel, it was so tiring I could reach Charles de Gaulle easily, but when I checked in S.U. plane, they said my name was not on the list and they demanded me to wait because I was on the waiting list. I felt shocked for a moment, but after it passed, I got terribly furious, because you confirmed it before three days as they instructed. But anyway, I could be on board the plane as one of the last passengers. I still can't understand why or how it happened and they don't know either. One of them said that maybe it's because of the computer mistake. So when I was seated in the plane, I was so tired, because I used up much of my energy inquiring & inquiring those bloody French.

In Moscow, they changed the plane, but there was no clear sign in the transit room and I had to be very nervous about the departure of the plane, otherwise I would have been left behind in that deserted, impersonal communist country. I was really fed up with the way the Russian people did. The only advantage of their plane is spacious seats and that's all. There were three meals during the whole flight, and the first meal was quite all right, with some kind of sauce made in ***Dijon***. But the meals were getting worse and worse.

In the plane I saw at least three couples in which wives were Japanese and husbands were French. Two of the couples had a child. One of the child's features are; brownish hair (the husband had a brown hair darker than yours), the big black eyes with long eyelashes, whitish skin, and quite small, thin nose and mouth. One of the couples was a curious combination: the husband looked older, maybe between 35 and 45, and the wife looked between 25 & 30. And ***she*** was taller than he! There were other children and a baby, and again their making noises and shouting and moving around me bothered me a lot. After taking off in Moscow, I felt almost crazy to think of the distance to be flown. But, because I had to manage it, I did it anyway.

When I landed in Tokyo, it was raining cats and dogs, but fortunately I could get a connecting flight after one hour, and I could see my mother at the Osaka airport, and it wasn't raining there. It took altogether 26 hours from your room to my room.

In Schiphol, they checked the hand luggage and the body quite thoroughly, which I didn't expect.

Anyway I'm now at home. I am only sad. I wasn't happy at all when I arrived home. Maybe I'll take a good rest and...

Fortunately the flesh in my mouth didn't ache during the flight and I was glad of that at least.

I hope that you can now concentrate on your studies.

As I couldn't use the 5 Guilders note, I'll enclose it in this envelope.

And lastly, I want to thank you once again for everything that you did for me during my stay there.

Namiko

Kyoto, Sep. 16, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter (13th). I am so glad to get it so soon.

Now, I think I've almost recovered from the flight itself, but my sleeping cycle is still that of Europe, and I can't sleep at 12:00 in the evening and I get up at 14:00. But on the very night of my arrival, I could have 14 hours' very deep sleep. Fortunately the temperature of Kyoto is not as high as I expected and it is already autumn in our country as well.

In Schiphol, when I was in the departure gate, I looked around the buildings on which the greeting people were, and I did imagine you as one of them, but it was too far to be recognized. Moreover the plane of Air France and the gate was connected by the corridor and I didn't see anything after passing it. But I wonder how you could recognize my plane! What I was thinking of at that moment was, of course, you, for how could I detach myself from the thought of you so suddenly after staying together for such a long time. All through the flight, I could not help thinking of you. But anyway I was full of resignations and I still am. But my saying thus, I don't mean to pay your attention, because I think I am a little stronger mentally than before and at least there's a satisfaction that I could get through the journey from the beginning (Japan) to the end (Japan).

I wrote to M. Morino (one page in Japanese) and to the people on your floor (a picture postcard).

Although your comment on this summer is just "quite all right", I would like to say it was "wonderful" for me. If it had not been for your studies and if there had been a separate room, I would have liked to stay in Europe longer. But I thought it better to go home when the holidays were over. Anyway I wish you a good luck in your exams. And I hope your cold is already cured because of that delicious medicine or at least getting better.

I'm not doing anything yet. I just don't feel like doing anything.

I hope you're not getting too many visitors in your room!

Love,

Namiko

P.S.
I heard "Fernando" on the radio and I watched Elton John & Kikidi(?) on T.V.

Kyoto, Sep. 25, 1976

Dear Hubert,

By the time this letter reaches you, I hope that your exam on October 1st has been over; though if you're still in its process, I wish you a good luck.

The photos which I enclosed in this envelope are not all the pictures we took; this is half of them. They're from the third film, for I thought of sending the first and second ones to my acquaintance who is a photographer, but changed my mind and took them to an ordinary photo shop, and so the first two, which I think more interesting, will be delayed to be sent to you. And please give two photos to Wim and three to Elias with my best regards. I wrote their names on the back of the pictures which I want to give them. If you want their pictures without you, tell me so the next time.

More than ten days have passed since I came back to Japan. And I began to study. As a matter of fact I caught cold two days after my arrival and I had an insistent coughing. but now I think it's almost over. But don't laugh at my weak body, I'll do something sooner or later.

It's almost certain that I can be repaid the money which I spent for doctors and the medicine from that American insurance company. (My home doctor said that the hay fever is originally a disease of America. Is that true?)

And I complained of that bloody hotel in Paris to the travel agency. They seemed not to know much about that hotel. Anyway they said they would check.

My mother once or twice asked me what kind of life I had with you in Utrecht. But after I refused to answer, she doesn't ask me any more. Since I came home, I never complained of the life here, though it's not satisfactory enough. And so I think this attitude can quite compensate everything connected with you. She once said that she feels lonely as I don't call her Mother as before. But of course this is an exaggeration. Only, I changed my former childish attitude toward her.

Though it's true that there's nothing enjoyable in the present life and I miss Holland quite a lot, I have at least what can be called an aim in the next four months; my exams will take place in February, but I'll have to present my dissertation in January already, so I haven't enough time, but I think I can manage it.

During my stay I'm afraid I did a lot of things which you don't like and which made you say that you found it sometimes very difficult. Forget any unpleasant memory of my and remember only the pleasant memories, please.

There're lots of unforgettable scenes in the life in Utrecht, but that first week in Aachen is particularly impressive, because I'd never seen the farm life. (I wish I could spend the Christmas holidays with you!)

Although I feel very empty, I don't feel like falling into depression. I don't like to be sad, as you once put it. Can you imagine in what kind of mental condition I am? It's very difficult to explain; maybe it's "not good, not bad."

I'm full of thanks to you in the sense that there would be no other person than you who does something for me as you did for me.

Still I can't tell what kind of change it is that I got from that experience. All I can say is that it was a change.

I must be still in my parents' house. It's not a nice place, but when I think of starting the life living alone, I tend to get worried.

I've not seen any friend of mine since I came home because I didn't want to contact them. But now I'm beginning to want to see a couple of them.

The weather in Kyoto is already quite cool, but we can still go without the heating devices. Autumn, the beautiful season is in its full process.

I hope you're already completely healthy, and you'll get the successful results in your exams.

Namiko

P.S.
That fountain pen from Mont Blanc pleased my father!

Kyoto, 27 Sep. 1976

Dear Hubert,

I'm glad to hear from you after 10 days' silence of yours. I imagined you were very busy for your exam. And congratulations on your success in the first exam! And I'm also glad to know that you recovered from your cold. But it made me laugh a lot that Elias is taking ***that*** medicine. Is he all right now?

It's a great honour for me if your having been depressed had anything to do with "your less of me"!

The lonely autumn weather reminds me of the last Saturday (11th) when we were closed up by the rain, do you remember?

My flesh over the wisdom teeth stopped paining me, so I won't go to the dentist for the time being. I imagine it's because of the foods; I'm eating rice twice a day as a main food and rice has no hard edges, and other foods are generally quite smooth, compared to the Western foods. And I wonder if this is the reason why more Europeans have a wisdom tooth trouble than us.

If I go abroad next time, I wish I would go to Europe again, because I'm still afraid of America and because in Europe I can feel that I'm in the "centre" of the world. When I first heard your European centric opinion, I got irritated and fed up with it, but I changed my mind, now that I'm in the ***poor*** Far East, and I came to think it nice to feel that I'm in the centre of the world. (By the way, there was an incident during my absence, that a Soviet pilot sought refuge from U.S.S.R. in Japan, landing on the coast of Hokkaido in the mightiest fighter plane. Maybe you know this incident already. And both Japan and America are very keen on dissecting this machine to know the mechanism of its excellency. The Soviets are very angry with us and stopped some Soviet-Japanese friendly events which were scheduled.) Anyway, next time I go to Europe, I wish to visit first ***Holland***, and then London, the Rhine and Greece.

I forgot telling it to you already, but the other day, my parents offered me an arranged marriage. The person is an acquaintance of my father's aunt in law. He is a medical doctor. Of course I refused on the spot.

I have still my traveller's checks with me, because in the exchange rate between U.S. dollars and our Yen, U.S. dollars is getting weaker (1 Dollar = 285 Yen. When I bought dollars I paid for one dollar almost 300 Yen) and I would lose quite a big amount of Yen if I change it now. I have 640 Dollars. I'll take time and wait till the rate gets more favourable for me.

I began to use my bicycle at home, but in the first few days, my riding is very unsure because the brakes are on the handles.

I hope that you're already recovered the peace and "diligence" of your normal study period. I still feel very sorry that you had to go to the library in the last two weeks.

Namiko

October 9, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter from Aachen.

It's a pity that you don't think you passed that bloody exam in literature. But I still wish you would pass it. For my part, my preparation process is advancing little by little, because I don't want to be so nervous about the exam and to be influenced by their strains. Only, I have an aim in the coming three or four months, and if I fail which is quite likely , I haven't the slightest idea what I should do next. But in that case, I won't be so pessimistic and desperate. All I fear in case of my failure is that I'm going to be very nihilistic. I could stand the sadness and pessimism, but it's most painful for me to stand nihilism. Anyway I'll do my best and I try to think that it's not examiners who test me, but it's me who challenge them.

Anyway, as you once recommended it to me, I want to leave my parents' house next spring, though that plan is still very vague.

By the way, I bought the tapes and text books for learning the Dutch language. In that text there appears a person whose name is 'Schepers'. I intend to start using these tapes and text books at the beginning of next year. But the tapes sound so formal and don't sound natural enough.

The other day, I went to Nara to see an assistant professor there. I told her how it was in Holland, and about you, and she said that she thinks what I got from that experience is so great and that you were a 'good teacher' for me. In fact, she knows how I was after coming back from Oxford last year when I told her that I had no aim at all. And compared to the last year, I've made a progress and been grown up.

You seem to feel that there's nothing much to be talked about any more between you and me. Isn't it true? Though I still want to talk, if you don't mind. Now, I remember your once having said that this summer's meeting was a 'coronation' of the past one year. I feel that word seems to summarize everything what you feel.

Now here in Japan, at home, I have been feeling something strange since I came back.
And recently I found out that there's a feeling in my mind that the past spent for such a long time at home was cut up by the two & half months' experience abroad. Of course it's not true at all that I got 'reborn', but anyway it does me good to some extent, I think.

And I showed a couple of photos of you to a friend of mine and she said that you look so nice, and to my great dissatisfaction she also said that you are ***too*** good for me. (I wonder what she means by that!) And she added that you look like a movie star. These photos I showed her are the part of those which I enclosed in this envelope.

As for Elias's photos, I'm sorry that you fell again into a prey of his 'scientific explanation'. Does he still quite often come into your room?

About my visa, I've not yet made a contact with the Dutch consulate. I don't feel like cancelling it now. It might sound strange, but it's a psychological resistance; if I inform them of our decision of not marrying, it absolutely means we don't marry, though it's a fact. Maybe I'll cancel it sooner or later.

So this is the end of today's letter. Do write to me when you feel like it, please.

Namiko

P.S.
How did you know that somebody tried to steal my lovely bicycle?

Kyoto, October 12, 1976

Dear Hubert,

I received your letter this morning. It's a pity that the result of your exam was not successful. Maybe your preparation period was not long enough because of your toothache. Although you say to yourself, it doesn't matter, I imagine that the fact that you didn't succeed, somehow affects or shadows your present mental condition, at least unconsciously. For, our mood is so easily influenced by such a small thing in our daily life. But anyway I wish you would succeed in it next time.

I hope you are already out of depression when you read this letter, but if you are not, I feel sorry for you. During my stay, I never saw you depressed as you are now in your last letter and you always overwhelmed me by speaking of depression so vigorously. But I know that you have the ability to 'play with' the depression when it comes, instead of being defeated by it completely. So I wasn't surprised when you wrote that you are getting tired of life. I still think that your strength to live is too much stronger than your "degree of 'getting tired of life'". But I wonder what's the matter when you said that you feel 'something like extremely tired' with planning of going abroad. It might mean that you've been quite settled down there in Holland or you grow quite 'old' (don't get angry with me for using this word, 'old'). I imagine that when you've got completely used to one thing, you begin to feel dissatisfied with the status quo and to seek for something new. But I think it would be better not to quit all the comfortable things in your present life. It's only one year since you have been settled down there in Holland. I thought you've been quite settled down both mentally and practically there. But I don't mean that being settled down is the most important thing. And yet, I think it worthwhile to try another one year there while making a big trip abroad in between. It's you who said that it's a nice thing to have a 'centre' in your life. You could wait for the next summer to make a journey to North Africa. Since you got through your unpleasant trip to Israel once, I believe there isn't absolute difficulty in your going to North Africa next summer. If you can't wait till then, you can go to some nearer countries & cities in Europe, such as London, France and northern Europe. But I feel a little bit responsible if you're getting a little bit frustrated because you couldn't go abroad this year, except to Paris, because of me. (I think you are lucky for having been born in Europe; I still envy you in this respect. There are so many unknown places interesting to be seem in Europe, aren't there? You can keep your plan of going to the north of Africa as a plan and as a dream, and it always takes such a long time to realise a 'dream'.) But it maybe true that a change ***is*** necessary for you now. This summer you gave me a great change and it did me so good. But for you, it wasn't a change; maybe for you it was a heap of mental stresses and tensions because of the other person's existence.

Recently I came to feel that I am happy because I am still young and not so wear as not to be able to do what I want to do. And it's partly you who make me realise this and encouraged me to try anything. I'm happy because I'm still in the twenties and the twenties is the beautiful and precious age, because at thirty I would feel really old to try a new thing. And in this respect, you are far luckier because you're a man and you needn't be so nervous about your physical age and moreover, you are physically strong. On the other hand I am handicapped in the sense that I am a female and I am not as strong as you are physically. Yet I feel

glad that I have still some more years in the twenties. I had never been glad of my age till this summer. I know there is a limitation for what I can do and maybe I've already reached there; but still I believe I prefer being twenty three to being thirty. And it's you who brought me such a delightful sensation. So however weak I am, I am still trying life. And it's you who helped me break a little bit through that 'dead end'. If it hadn't been for the change of this summer, I would have still lingered around that labyrinth and my depressive mental habit would have worsened and been helpless. So why can you complain? You have more advantages than me. It's you who taught me that principle of life, which is very nihilistic but nevertheless very convincing and far better than jumping at the abstract, philosophical or religious theory.

You seem to decide not to marry and decide to travel around all your life. But I think marriage is one thing and travelling around is another, though you couldn't marry a woman who doesn't accept or understand your 'mania' of travelling around. It's very difficult for two things to go with each other, though. I don't think it completely useless to travel around and around ceaselessly. Maybe for some people it is absolutely necessary to go on living. But it would be nicer to have a centre somewhere at the same time, as you once put it.

Although you mentioned that it's better for me to marry someone whom I like a bit. But how can you imagine that I can marry someone whom I like 'a bit'? For me it's better not to marry than to marry such a person. I couldn't marry except a person for whom I feel like doing something. So please don't advise me carelessly to marry. I still can't forget you and it'll take at least two years to forget you a bit. If I don't forget you, I can't marry another person, because it seems obvious that to marry another person without forgetting the former 'lover' will turn out to be a failure. But I still don't like to forget you. And as for a child, I thought over and over this problem, I came to the conclusion that it's better not to have children if I haven't confidence enough in raising it up and being responsible as a parent till it grows up. Besides it's not certain if I am a woman who gets a child physically. As a matter of fact, when you said one night, "Let's make our baby", I felt quite delightful, but I came to think it's impossible to make and raise a child only out of the sense of dream and the theoretical wish. I imagine the reality will betray me cruelly.

Nowadays I try to avoid falling into depression. Maybe it's unnatural, but I'm trying. November 6th is the wedding of my sister in law's brother and my brother and she comes home. And in December she is expecting a baby. I don't want to see all those. Maybe I'll be depressed and crazy around that date.

I hope you try to be happy with your present life and don't drink too much alcohol during your depression period.

I sometimes miss you terribly, and Holland, and the flowers. (On my mother's birthday, October 8th, I bought five red roses and five white carnations for her. But our roses are no rivals of Dutch roses.) I want to go to Europe the year after next year or later.

Namiko

P.S.
Both of my parents take Wim for a girl in seeing his picture!

Kyoto, October 23, 1976

Dear Hubert,

I received your 'sad' letter this morning. It's Saturday. I really feel sorry that you're still in depression. It's too long, isn't it? But didn't you attend your lectures during this period? I think it seems very unusual for you to be inactive, because as far as I knew, you're a very active person normally. I don't think there should be only ***one*** reason for your depression, for as far as I've experienced, the depression is caused by a couple of, or several elements of your environment. Maybe the coming gloomy weather, the result of your exams, your not having been abroad are the part of its reasons. Or I imagine that you might think your present aim, that is, to finish your university, not so meaningful and that, moreover, it will take a long time still.
Are you thinking of the emptiness of life in general, in a rather abstract and vague way? Sometimes we can't help but think of life in that way, but I thought you had taken the emptiness and meaninglessness of life for granted, and on this ground you'd decided to enjoy life.

Maybe whatever I write would sound flat and hollow. For in a depressive period, we feel bound so rigidly to the heavy shadow, that we almost can't even move and we feel that though nothing physical pains us but everything around us pains us so terribly and we lose all the interests in everything. Even when reading the newspapers, nothing enters into our head. These are the phenomena of depression in quite a serious stage. They might not be true of everybody, though.

In your letter of Oct. 8, you said that when you think you've reached the deepest point, you would kill yourself. And it reminds me that I myself mentioned it so many times in the past. And I'm ashamed of myself for that, because in my case, I might have said that to the other people, especially to you, partly in order to make others pay attention to me and pity me. In your own case I think it's a little bit different; I used to say, "Oh, I want to die!", whereas you refer to death as a statement. Anyway, whenever I hear other people speak of suicide, it gives me a kind of shock, more or less. I must confess that if you die suddenly, I would lose almost all the interests in life. But please don't think that I'm writing in such a 'flattering' way because this is a letter and it's safe and there's detachment. But that is what I felt instinctively immediately after I read that line of yours.

Concerning myself I'm not so strong now; I'm ***a little bit*** stronger mentally than before, and I must say it's all thanks to the experiences in Europe this summer. During the stay, I didn't think I got such a lot of good influences. But as the time passes, I came to think more & more that that experience was really good for me. Though in fact I do feel nihilistic from time to time in my daily life, I try not to think everything so seriously as you taught me. I don't know how long this mental condition of mine will last, but I think the life is a little bit easier, because I've decided not to die for the time being or at least I've postponed the fulfilment of that old idea to the very later date.

After coming home, a new attitude to know more about Japan objectively, to know more facts about it through books and papers, etc., appeared. I still think it was unlucky for me to have been born in Japan, because I like Europe fundamentally. But anyway, this fact is immovable, so the only way is to know the facts of both sides. And I came to feel that because Japan got quite ***Westernised*** a

century ago and the Japanese people are quite flexible in the sense that they could accept it, it might be easier for them to adapt themselves in Europe than for an European to adapt themselves in Japan. For the people in a higher civilization never knows how hard the effort to convert into another higher civilization is. In Japan people are kind to the foreigners, but they don't accept them, or at least regard them as their equals, in the depth of their hearts. When you first mentioned that statement, I couldn't believe it, but now I feel it might be true.

So I can't even say nice things to you when you're depressed. But I'd like to say to you for the first time; Cheer you up!

And will you please send my message to the members of your floor: That letter was so delightful and pleased me a lot, I miss Holland terribly.

Namiko

P.S.
I'm writing the "Memoirs" of this summer in Japanese in a diary form, in which, now I woke up in the afternoon on the first day in Seffenter Berg! Your name is "M".

Kyoto, October 29, 1976

Dear St. Hubert,

Forgive me for writing to you perhaps out of sentimentality & nostalgia.

It's getting quite cold here in Kyoto as well and it's blowing quite hard today. The smell of autumn makes me restless and sentimental. I'm imagining the autumn & the winter in Holland. Are you still cycling around in the cold air? Your daily life is like that of the summer which I knew? Are you already all right mentally? I hope so. Today I ordered the oil for my oil stove.

The days are passing away so quickly, which makes me uneasy, because I never wish that my youth would be over.

In the last couple of weeks of my stay in your room, you said you couldn't concentrate on your studies because of my presence. And at that time I couldn't believe it, but recently I came to know that I disturbed you a lot in that respect. For, once I started studying myself, I came to understand that to be able to study whenever & wherever you like is an important condition for studying. I must apologize you for my lack of understanding you fully.

I'm writing and writing my dissertation. I wrote 14 pages but 4 out of fourteen must be abolished because of its poor contents, and I must arrange the materials quite carefully; it's so tiring. But I've already read one of F. Sagan's novels which I bought in Utrecht and now I'm reading ***L'étranger*** by Albert Camus.His sentences are easier than I thought and I came to like him better than before.

Also I'm writing the "Memoirs" of this summer as I told you in my last letter. Though is doesn't advance to my satisfaction (We are going to Vaals now). It reminds me of so many memories in Aachen and made me full of nostalgia. My descriptions are so in detail that I feel as if I were repeating what happened there again.

That short tape of our interview of the last week makes me giggle whenever I hear it, but it makes me feel a little bit lonely.

The other day I watched a soccer match between Eindhoven & St. Etienne (in France?). The stadium was in Eindhoven, and I hope I can see that stadium in Utrecht some day on our T.V.

Yesterday I re read a couple of your letters before my journey, for the first time since I am back. Now they sound more realistic because I know already how's the life in Utrecht.

So, I'm doing so many 'ceremonies' to make me recollect you and this summer. It's because of the autumnal weather.

You once said that being pessimistic is my nature and it would never change. I think you're right, for I'm getting a little bit depressed again. I thought my depression was cured after I came back, but it came again. But it's not so serious, because I won't let myself fall headlong down into it.

So I am terribly missing you now.

Namiko

Kyoto, November 1st, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter and G. Bataille. Both have arrived at the same time. I'm so glad to have it, and it is really such a delight to get a book by air mail! (But did the book shop send it to me directly? I don't think so.) And I'm also very glad to hear that you are quite all right now.

These days I sometimes imagine your very bold winter which you had last year. When writing to you in this cold season, it seems to me as if there didn't exist that summer and I feel I'm repeating this, year after year. I believe it's because of the autumnal season which agitates me and makes me speak a lot of nonsense, just as Meursault in Camus's ***L'étranger*** killed the Arab because of the heat of the sun. Now I'm in the last chapter of this book and I'll start G. Bataille a couple of days later. Is ***Histoire de l'œil*** an independent story from other stories in this book?

Aren't you yet in the high spirits like in last June?

I think life is made as too lonely. I recently feel like sharing this loneliness with a person whom I love. I thought in Utrecht that solitude becomes me, and now I am living in the almost complete solitude apart from my family. I want to have may own castle alone with somebody with whom I feel like living together. But it won't be realised, because I am an especially 'difficult' person.

I'm going to sit for the exams of three universities in all, but today I phoned up one of them to know that it doesn't accept a dissertation re written; I'll have to present my old graduation thesis if I want to sit for the exam. It was a shock to me to some extent, because that old one is out of the question, in my opinion. I'm getting a very pessimistic view of the result of all those exams. But still I'll go on living for the time being.

You said that you're not yet sure if you go on staying in Holland. But have you already thought out an alternative?

I'm a little bit surprised that you were 'caught' by the police because of ignoring the traffic light. Isn't the spot in question the traffic light quite near the bridge on the way to the ***Mensa*** where you used to ignore it?

Now I'm losing all the confidences in the exams. But till the end of January I'll have to do a lot of things. I have to read an English linguistic book and, maybe an anthology of poetry.

Sometimes I'm almost overwhelmed by the nostalgia for Europe.

By the way your T.V. is still all right?

So here I'll terminate this a little bit 'gloomy' letter.

Hope to hear from you soon!

Namiko

Kyoto, November 12, 1976

Dear Hubert,

I hope you've not forgotten me already.

I'm reading G. Bataille's "Histoire de l'œil". When I first read it, I couldn't be used to his way of writing and to what he writes. But now I'm quite used to it, so it doesn't disturb my senses much. But still I imagine if it is put on in a movie or in a theatre, I couldn't watch it. Or if I read it in the Japanese version (though it's already translated here or not, I don't know.), I'll give it up after several pages. But thanks to my lack of French knowledge, I can manage it without getting into much troubles. (By the way do you know the meaning of 'foutre' in a noun form? My French dictionary is not detailed enough to read Georges Bataille.) But I still don't know why you like him so much. Anyway his book shows me a new, but quite unusual world which I haven't known of so far and of which I haven't even imagined that it existed in this world.

Well, these days I'm quite shutting out myself from the world. Though I've had more than twenty winters in my life, I shrink away whenever the cold season comes. But maybe in Japan it's warmer then in Europe in autumn, for the other night when I watched T.V., a girl from Ireland said that it's much warmer in Japan. She is a singer, named Dina or something, do you know her?

Now I'm again hesitating whether I should leave my parents' home next spring, or not. In fact I do feel like leaving it, but it will cost me a lot of money, I'd rather save the money to be spent for that purpose, for my next trip to Europe, because I'm eager to stay in Europe at least for one year next time. And I want to realise this dream till I become thirty. But still my parents' house bothers me except the point that I can study quite comfortably here. And I haven't any interest in any other city in Japan except Kobe. But on the other hand I feel it's high time for me to leave here, otherwise I'll be rotten. When I entered the university I didn't, because I thought then in the same way as now. When I left the university, I thought again in the same way, seeing more advantages than disadvantages in staying at home. And next year this will be the last chance for my 'great' decision, if I miss that chance, I'm afraid I'll never be able to do it. But still I hesitate and hesitate, though there are still a few months time to decide. So to speak I'm fallen into a dilemma.

And there's another dilemma: the freedom or the marriage. Though at the moment I don't have any intention to marry, nor is there yet any suitable partner, I sometimes feel so urgently that I want a companion to talk with, to live with, because life is so short and too lonely to be endured alone.

As a matter of fact I've lost much interest in suicide. Life is not worthwhile for one human being to be suffered out so intensely; it's too meaningless to be given a suicide. So I want to enjoy it at least while young. And after that I have no hope. Thus I concluded, but this isn't a final conclusion, and maybe I'll choose suicide someday suddenly.

My sister in law is now in Kyoto, waiting for her childbirth after one month. Today she came to my house. I have nothing to talk about with her, so I don't go downstairs. Last week when she and her husband stayed here, I deliberately refused to see her, enduring upstairs my natural urgency to piss for a couple of hours and having neither breakfast nor lunch. It was unusual for me, I know, but sometimes I just can't stand even to see her face. After they're gone, my

mother accused me so severely for my behaviour, though I protested that I didn't bother them a bit, it's they who bothered me a lot. I don't think what I did was absolutely right, nor do I mean to make an excuse of myself. But at least I think they have no right to accuse me as far as I didn't bother them at all. I feel it's rather me who is a victim, but I don't say anything about that. And at one time my mother complained that I don't call my sister in law a sister. I call her name, and I can't make myself call her my sister merely because of the legal relations. And when she parted her husband (they must live separately for a few months), I don't think she felt sorry in any sense. It's because they didn't marry out of love. For her, it seems, parting her husband is nothing. I know very well that you don't like this subject about my 'sister', but it's only you that I can talk to about this, for I've stopped 'washing our dirty linen in public'. So please spare me!

I'm quite all right, though I'm chronically depressed, in fact. Since I don't hear from you for quite a while, I wonder if you are away from Utrecht, or too busy in a washing machine, or too depressed again. I don't hope either of these.

Hope to hear from you soon.

Namiko

Kyoto, 16th November, 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter. Since I hadn't get any for two weeks, I was worrying if something happened to you. Last night before going to sleep, I hit upon an ominous idea that you committed suicide. But this afternoon I came home from Osaka to find your letter in the letterbox and I'm so glad that you're feeling very fine again. So you seem to recover at last your healthy self which should be your attribute.

Well, last Sunday my canary died. He was with us nearly for 13 years. A couple of hours before his death I saw him at the edge of the food box, plunging his head in his body, motionless. My father discovered him falling down on the floor in front of the food box. His legs were already stiff and his closed eyelids are quite wrinkled. But the orange and white colour of his feather still looked so fresh as if he were still alive. But his body was already cold. We buried him under the soil and my father gave him some water over the soil. I think it was better for him to die because he looked so weak these days and looked painful. But whenever I pass the empty place where he used to be, I feel really lonely. For whatever a small creature it may be, if you live with it for such a long time, you can't help feeling lonely for its death. I think he got already blind shortly before his death, for he couldn't land on the perching stick exactly and at one time he perched on my hand, thinking it his stick. Even now when the evening comes, I unconsciously find his cloth to cover his cage with. So this is the story about my canary. I imagined how my parents will grieve if I die. Death is such a hard reality. I can really feel that it's an eternal journey.

Recently I was terribly in a law temper, but today I went to Osaka and I could have a good relaxation. So now I'm in a very good mood. Your letter doubled it. At the institute in Osaka, I heard that one Japanese lady got M.A. degree in literature at Dublin University after two years study there. I think she studied extremely hard. A couple of years ago she also attended Oxford summer school at Somerville College. She was financed by that institute for two years.

Today I bought three books, spending about 40 Guilders.

By the way have you heard recently from Miss Doctor Murray? Myself I haven't written her any letter since I came back. About Georges Bataille, I'm still half way through it. Do you think it a really beautiful book? It looks too 'sale'. Just now Marcelle hung herself. I don't think the boy doesn't love either Simone nor Marcelle. Is it really Georges Bataille's view that at the top of love comes death? Anyway his book is too realistic.

As for the Japanese movie you mentioned in your last letter, I heard of that once. The reason why it has a French title is probably that N. Oshima produced it in France and maybe it's still prohibited to put it on here in Japan. He is a very famous movie producer here in Japan as well. Incidentally has any of G. Bataille's works ever been put into a movie?

I think I'm fairly enjoying reading Bataille. I think if I can bear him, I'll become more fond of D.H. Lawrence. He seems to be more orthodox.
Because the book is the one which ***you*** sent me with your sign, I appreciate it all the more. I'll take care of it far better than any other book in my collections.

Now I'm a little bit troubled, because it seems that there are very few universities which will accept a re written thesis. If there doesn't exist at all, I feel

like giving up taking any exam. I'm not yet sure. As a matter of fact I've already written 20 pages for about 2 months though I have to check it more thoroughly. I'm really getting angry about the absurdity of the Japanese university systems. But most probably, I'll sit for one or two exams, whether they accept the re written one or not.

Have you absolutely decided to continue to stay in Holland? Though it is certainly worth while to accomplish one thing, don't you think it's a little bit unpleasant to pursue the thing that you don't like much? From you I really learnt a lot. You're always trying to seek a better way, but do you think that your way which you're seeking it getting seen more clearly and fixedly. Or I wonder if we have to keep trying to find a way, if we don't want to be satisfied with one thing, all our life? But I think that it'll be more difficult to change one thing as we grow older, so we have to do it while young; on the other hand we can't absolutely draw a line in our life which decides to stop seeking. Maybe I'm still seeking too much in life. Maybe I'm an irreparable idealist.

But anyway, enjoy yourself as much as you can. And take care of yourself lest you should catch a cold.

Namiko

P.S.
An Englishman, living in Japan, said that whenever he comes back to England, he catches hay fever!

Sunday, 21st, November, 1976

Dear Hubert,

I've just finished Georges Bataille's "Histoire de l'œil". Well, I was most moved by the passage where they found the priest with his 'verge rose et dure' after Simone's confession. Three of them, the narrator, Simone and Sir Edmond seem very cruel in a way, but they are also a little bit comical. But the scenes after her confession in the church were too much for me. It was almost unreal, but what is curious about this book is that it is real and at the same time unreal. I think it was brilliant of G. Bataille to say in the book that the sacred bread is sperm of Christ and the wine is urine. I've never known such a complete, terrible atheist as Bataille. I don't know much about his career and background. The literary dictionary that I consulted doesn't mention any of his novels, but only his essays. So I imagine that the present age emphasizes only his erotic aspect.

I'll read other two stories contained in the pocket book. But after finishing "Histoire de l'œil", I found bitterly that my French knowledge is by far insufficient. Will you tell me what 'un camp de torture' is like?

There is one more thing that I want to ask you. Will you explain the literary term, 'erlebte Rede' to me? I think it's German. It's nothing to do with Bataille, though.

Incidentally I have to correct what I said about that Japanese movie. It's now put on even in Kyoto. (But I have no intention to see it.) And it was produced by Japan & France cooperatively.

Well, now, the social atmosphere is a little bit exhilarating because of the coming election in Japan.

Are you going to skate on the canal this year? Is there already ice there?

I sometimes feel like coming back in your pocket again. When I'm in Japan, I long for being abroad. I'm now reading a book about Japan one after another written both by the Japanese and by the foreigners. I want to establish my self identity. Although my ideal is to be a cosmopolitan, it's so unsteady to wander between two or more than two different cultures. I like European culture so much. If you say that you're in the centre of the world, I wouldn't be angry any more. But I can't deny Japan completely, because it is my home country. It's almost one's instinct to defend it in one way or the other. I think I'm quite involved in Europe. The Japanese people without much interest in it will never know such a bunch of complex and confusing emotions and thoughts about Japan and Europe (or the world) as I have daily. In that sense they haven't changed since 100 years before. Their small universe is perfect by itself and they're content with their little world. Though nowadays people here in Japan seem to be much dissatisfied with the society. I found out that it's not only me, but almost all the Japanese who have been abroad that speak fiercely ill of Japan. But on the other hand, the people who're satisfied with Japan never know the splendour and beauty of the other world. So I'm both lucky and unlucky. To feel things as the Europeans do is very difficult or almost impossible for me, but I'm fortunate that it helps me approach it little by little by seeing things through Your eyes. So in that respect you're essential to me.

Recently I read in the paper that E.C. is regarding Japan as their 'potential enemy' in the economical world. I think it's partly due to the geographical distance,

lack of true understanding. The paper says that it suits their convenience to do so, for they can regard neither U.S. nor the middle East as their 'potential enemy!

So I'm quite all right at least for today. I hope every thing is going well with you, too.

Namiko

Kiyoto, 23rd Nov. 1976

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter (16th). Today is our national holiday. I slept till noon. It's quite chilly recently, but it's not yet a real winter.

I'm now reading Georges Bataille's "Madame Edwarda". Have you read that, too? It's not only because it's written in French, that I read his book. It's chiefly because it's a recommendation book by you. I came to feel that his book gives me a kind of catharsis to my 'suppressed' emotions.

Days are flying away terribly fast. Although everyday is almost the same and during a day, I sometimes feel bored, days are disappearing into God knows where ceaselessly.

I can't seize the reality. Even if knowing what I'm doing now concretely, it wouldn't make any sense if it is seen in a wider perspective. I think to live comfortably depends upon how successfully one can deceive oneself.

My mother once said that if I don't want to adapt myself to the customs and tradition here, there's no other way than to leave here. But I'm afraid wherever I may go, as long as I'm in Japan, things will be the same fundamentally.

As for marriage, how can you declare so certainly that you think you'll never marry?! You'll never know. It's likely that you'll change your mind if you meet your ideal woman in the future. If that's your way of discouraging me from thinking of you, you needn't say that any more. I'm trying not to ask you any unreasonable things. But after all, whatever you may say, my 'habit' of thinking of you won't be changed for the time being. Though it's me who suggested first to break up our relation, I changed my mind, and now I think it so painful to break it up so suddenly and completely. It's as if breaking one little precious dream that I got after a long time.

There's no assurance that I'll pass the exams next February. I hope I will. But I feel there's something more important than the success of the exams. Maybe I'm madly seeking for something like an Utopia. But I'm not sure.

I hope you are not disturbed by my letters from Japan.

Namiko

Saturday, 27th November, 1976

Dear Hubert,

I received your letter written between last Sunday and Monday. I wonder what made you think that everything is meaningless after coming home late at night from the city. Maybe glasses of beer made you a little bit sentimental, or since many people tend to say what they really feel, when drunk, it might be no wonder that you said that everything is meaningless then. At night I myself often feel everything vain and ask myself if I have done anything worthwhile during the day.

You seem to decide to keep going on in Holland. But one thing that worries me is that you can't be interested in the subject. You may not be able to change your subject anymore, but I think subject is very important. If you have to stick to it by all means, why don't you try to find any interesting aspect in the field? If you can't like the whole, I think you can at least like the part of it. Otherwise it'll be completely meaningless. To pursue the thing you don't like at all, is a waste of precious time. Just as you once said that my pessimistic nature won't be changed till I die, so I think your nature of wandering, repeating trial and error won't be changed, either. But to have a good direction or not is another matter. Maybe you're 'unfortunately' so talented in various fields that it is quite difficult for you to devote yourself to only one field. Once you said that you are German mentally, then it seems that you could make your present subject a little more interesting anyhow. I hope you can do it.

As for people, since you looked like a very hospitable person to my eyes, it's a little hard to imagine that you feel people troublesome. But at least you have a couple of, or more 'bosom' friends, and between these friends and you, you can develop a more valuable relationship. It's natural that you can change the way in which you contact people, depending on people.

I myself still fear people quite vaguely. I really came to feel nowadays, that so many people are going to die without doing anything meaningful at least absolutely or objectively. However hard they think they've lived, it's almost nothing in the light of the human history. How sad the human fate is! According to T.S. Eliot, there are only birth, copulation and death. But I don't see any sense in the preservation of race. But anyway I'm trying to find what seems to me a very important thing in life.

Namiko

December 6, 1976

Dear Hubert,

I think it's already the season again when the mails are delayed to be delivered because of so many Christmas cards. I hope you're all right and everything is all right.

I feel that all through last year I was living only on your letters, but now I must live on nothing. I wouldn't say any more that there's nothing delightful in life, because there ***was*** a happy time anyway. But still I think life is nothing but a disillusionment, a comedy, full of resentments, a hope betrayed by the reality, deceptions, mockeries, degradation, it's a bad joke.

I feel as if I'm deserted by the whole world, because I just don't try to like it. There are two groups of people: one whom I like very much and the other I hate too much. Can you imagine what it is like to hate other people while suffering? I can never hate them without suffering myself, but still I must hate them, because I think it's better not to be hypocritical.

I can't stand the family ties any more. It's so difficult to accept their way of living. Here I am blamed if I don't try to show myself dependent upon them. But there in Europe you demand independence. Here if I challenge them and declare that I am independent, I'll be terribly hated. It's not only me, but a friend of mine said the same thing.

But I must admit I'm still too childish. For example, I had a fear of getting a cancer and told my mother the fact, but she didn't show any interest in it at all. She just said, "If you have one, why don't you have one of your breasts cut". The operation for breast cancer is very easy if you discover it at the earliest stage. On the other hand my parents are so much concerned with the coming bloody baby. But to my eyes, or to everyone's eyes, childbirth is a natural phenomenon, whereas a cancer is a genuine disease. So I got very indignant toward my mother's contradictory attitude. Maybe she's reasonable because it's nonsense to worry about the disease till it's absolutely confirmed. But what makes me angry is that they're pouring out so many unnecessary solicitudes to the childbirth. (As for me, unfortunately it is not a cancer, it's turned out today. But I must see a doctor once a week to have an injection to disperse that node.

The other day a friend of my mother asks her some information about me to see if she can choose me as a bride of her son. It's a kind of arranged marriage. But strange point is, that her son is not told even about my existence and he has no intention to marry yet. The friend of my mother is looking for her son's bride on his behalf. It sounds so funny, doesn't it? My mother refused indirectly without asking me anything at all. It's so amusing, rather than offending.

I'm getting more and more afraid of the Japanese family system. I wouldn't be able to stand to be interfered so frequently by the family into which I marry. I'm now reading a book entitled, "Chripunthemum and Sword" by an American woman anthropologist. It's a study of Japanese culture, tradition and nature. And in this book I found the following sentence:

... The Japanese set up no ideal, as we do in the United States, which pictures love and marriage as one and the same thing.

This bloody American lady knows Japan better than I know it, it seems.

I have no place to go is my favourite saying. I can't be mixed with either Japan or Europe. I can't be mixed with either home or society. For from the beginning I avoided entering the society because it's a man's society. You might say why don't you be a pioneer, but I don't want to be a victim of such a desperate movement, for life is very short and I'd rather like to do other lovelier things.

Sorry to send such a nasty letter, but it's a result of my resentments and misery. But what is marvellous is that I don't feel like dying at all even in such a condition. It's a wonderful outcome of this summer's training!

So you can expect a nicer letter next time.

Take care of yourself.

With best wishes,

Namiko

P.S.
How's my bicycle now? Is she still all right?

January 16, 1977

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your lovely picture postcard. I remembered our eating the ice cream around there didn't we?

My exams will be held in February 1st and 16th. I'll try two; Nara & Tokyo. Some days ago I was so nervous that my stomach went wrong and last Tuesday I had fever (38.3 °C). All I wish now is that these depressing exams would be over as soon as possible.

My sister in law laid a boy in December but I'll never want to see either of them.

At the end of last year a relative of ours offered me an arranged marriage and I applied for it, but was refused. The reason of their refused is that I'm too 'intellectual'. The man concerned is a future judge, aged 25. They refused me even without seeing me.

Today, I heard on the radio that nice song 'Tango d'Amour' in French by Vicky something.

The world is now treating me not so nicely, but I'm looking forward to spring to come, then I'll have my hair cut, and probably I'll make a little trip.

Namiko

Tokyo, Feb. 16th, 1977

Dear Hubert,

This is from Tokyo. I'm writing to you now in a post office in the university. This morning I had an exam in French. Now it's lunch time. This afternoon I'm going to sit for the exam in English literature and linguistics. And tonight I'm going home, if I could buy a train ticket for a reserved seat.

Yesterday on my way to Tokyo, there happened an accident: some bloody rascal informed the authority of his having installed an explosive stuff somewhere on the rails. Then they went out for searching the explosive between the distance of 8 km. During their search , which lasted nearly 2 hours, I was suspended in a stopped train. Because of this the train was delayed in arriving in Tokyo, while normally it takes only 3 hours. But after all no explosive was found out and it turned out that that telephone was a mere threat and a wicked mischief. When I first heard the announcement, I could not help but laugh. But soon after that I came to wonder what would become of the passengers if there were really an explosive. But most of the people didn't seem to mind; they seemed to believe such a thing was impossible. But some of the passengers got angry, saying "It's no laughing matter", when the conductor made the announcement, half laughing himself.

The district of the university has a kind of university atmosphere, but it's not so attractive to me. (Utrecht is by far better.)
I wanted to send you a picture postcard, but I couldn't get it easily. So excuse me.

With best wishes,

Namiko

March 4, 1977

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter. Since I didn't here from you for quite a long time, I imagined you were depressed, and your last letter proved that I was right. By now I hope you're much less depressed, but If you still are, cheer you up, please! I can't bear to imagine you getting so depressed and sad in this cold season.

As for my exams, I'm glad to tell you that I succeeded in one (Nara Women's University). As to Tokyo University I was successful in the first step exam, but the result of the final exam will be known only tomorrow. I thought of informing you of the results after everything is settled. But reading your letter today, I could not help taking a pen immediately to write to you. Anyway I'll post this letter tomorrow after knowing the final result of Tokyo University. (So far I've been to Tokyo three times in the last month.)

This winter it's reported that it is unusually cold and it snowed a lot. In Kyoto there wasn't much snow, but for a few days in February the tap water was frozen in my house, too. When I was in Tokyo for the third time, I saw on T.V. a "Fasching" scene in Germany and I remembered your once saying that in carnival people are allowed to do whatever they like.

Recently it is much less often that I get depressed. Instead of being depressed, however, I'm inclined to feel a tremendous sense of mental fatigue. Seeing the elderly people, I sometimes wonder how they could live for such a long time. One solution may be to think less or nothing of anything, for the wore I think, the more this mental fatigue increases. But after all it's impossible for me not to think. Nor do I wish to rely once again on that American psychiatrist of something, Dale Carnegie.

I think one of the remedies against depression is that you get calm and relaxed enough to ***play with*** depression, instead of trying desperately to escape from it. This couldn't be called 'a remedy', but there's no absolute or direct remedy for it. Maybe you can dodge it, though not escape from it, to some extent, I hope.

When my mental fatigue oppresses me too much, I still think of suicide. But at the moment there's no definite motivation.

If you can't be interested in your study, I think you could quit your university, altogether, but I still think it better for you to stay there at least until you get your first degree. You've been already half way through it.

Lastly about my marriage, the man whom I told you that I might see, said that he has no intention to marry now. It was only his mother who made a fuss and made fool of me. It's really funny and ridiculous. That man is already 30, but he had a bad impression from his first partner of his arranged marriage, and since then he is said to have been hurt his feelings. What an adult child he is! (He is a scholar!)

So far I was offered 4 arranged marriages in the last several months. One of them agreed to have an interview with me, which I refused. One of them refused to see me from the beginning, and the rest of the two had no intention to marry at the moment.

Maybe being a student again, I won't marry for the next two years. I sometimes feel it very nice to be single and free, then I can do whatever pleases

me. Japanese men are to conservative, and when I get my M.A. degree, the number of the men who dare to marry me will be largely reduced. Poor Japanese boys!

March 5, 1977

I failed in Tokyo University in the final exam, but I'm not shocked. For Tokyo is the worst city in the world that I've ever seen. I'm glad that everything is over now concerning my entrance exams.

I hope you'll be all right as the spring approaches.

And I also hope to hear from you soon.

Namiko

March 18, 1977

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter and for your hearty congratulations on my success in the exam. I owe a deep gratitude to you concerning this good result, for I was encouraged a lot by your encouragements so far. Maybe the university life will be a little bit boring, because there are no boys except teachers (mostly old men, I'm afraid). But since the school is rather calmly located, it'll do me good. The opening ceremony will take place on April 8th. If everything goes all right, I'll graduate from here after two years. It takes about one hour and a half to go from my house to the university.

Ironically, shortly after I knew the result, the happy feeling was gone. While I was preparing, I wished everything would be over as soon as possible. But when it was over, I was not very happy. There are very few things which really attract me in life. Anyway something is better than nothing do you agree with me?

When I went to see a doctor the other day, he told me that there's a medicine that cures 'masked depression'. But unfortunately he didn't diagnosed me as 'masked depression'. So he didn't give me that medicine.

Are you going to have some holidays in March or April? Have you already planned your summer vacation? I hope you'll not be depressed again till next November.

Good-bye.

Namiko

April 1, 1977

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter. It was very interesting.

It's more than six months already since I left you. I'm missing Holland very much now, because I'm writing a record of that summer's lovely memories. I've already wrote about 160 pages. I'm now in Switzerland again. This process of recording forces me to recollect everything in detail that happened then. It is so well written that sometimes it gives me a pain, overwhelmed by them, by the past and the reality, it's over, absolutely: it's being a piece of picture forgotten. During last several months when I was busy in the preparatory studies for the exams, your existence seemed to me rather remote. But now you're reviving to my life again with such vividness. But what I wrote about you is the You half the year ago, the You of the past, and I wouldn't be surprised if you're changed in anyway since then.

But I want to finish this work as soon as possible, I may write 100 pages more. The reason, or the motivation, is that I want to make it a proof of my youth, and that it would be useful for the better understanding of me by others, after I die quite early, abruptly, without remaining a will. So I want to keep the writing to myself as long as I'm alive, but when there's a chance, I would feel like showing it to a person who could really appreciate it. It's written in Japanese, and there's not a single sentence that would hurt your honour.

I'm still very much obsessed by the idea of love & marriage. I understand ***theoretically*** very much, that a little later marriage is better then a too early marriage. But I seriously fear that it should be to late und I should miss a chance for ever.

The other day an uncle of mine visited us. When I told him my view of future husband that is "a life long accessory of my life", he got very angry and said, "As long as you maintain that view, it's better not to marry." But I stated that, because I thought that any couple being married long would be something like a dirty, unmoving water, like that of a canal. And if a marriage works well, the existence of the other partner will not value more than "an air", invisible, but essential to life. Maybe it's useless to think the matter too seriously. If in the future I can be financially independent and then I can find a person whom I like, I might choose the way to live together without marrying and to be separated when the love is over. At the moment I have no such person. I've never touched any man since we parted. In spite of my obsession, it's not altogether true that I'm desiring a sexual partner now. I just want a man with whom I could enjoy the conversation, and from whose world I could get something meaningful to my life. But unfortunately it seems that not many men believe in the possibility of friendship between two sexes, at least in Japan.

That uncle of mine I mentioned earlier, is somehow typical of an average Japanese man. He said that many husbands don't want their wives to be ***disputatious***. When coming home from work, tired, they just want their wives to be obedient and serve for him. They also seem to regard their wives as a machine to breed and raise their children.

Apart from those obsessions, I think I can enjoy being single. But at the moment, there's one trouble, and that is, the question of my leaving home or not leaving home now. In the long perspective, it's better to leave now, but I came to a

conclusion that I won't, mainly for the financial reason. But I'm scolding myself for this timidity, for this hesitation; I might hesitate for ever on this question, to leave or not to leave home. But, as I'm not independent yet, I think I'll stay home for the time being. There are many things to be solved if I leave it now, but there'll arise lots of other troubles. But I still don't forgive myself for this hesitation.

I sometimes compare this season of this year with that of the last year, with a lot of pain & sentimentality. You're lucky, because you're a native of Europe, and Your spring will be sweet, and what is better, Your summer will be sweeter, while My spring increases my frustration and the heat of My summer to come will wither me. I have no plan for the next summer vacation, before which I must adapt myself to a new environment, that is, school.

I hope you'll enjoy your Easter holidays and then will be successful in the following exams.

Yours,

Namiko

Rokko, 28 April, 1977

Dear Hubert,

Thank you very much for your letter from Aachen.

This letter is from the Rokko mountain (not the Rocky mountains, unfortunately), which is located near Kobe. As a matter of fact, I ran away from home, seeking rest and quietness. I'm going to stay at his hotel for four days. It's a quarter to nine in the evening, and it is very quiet.

Nara, where my university is, is rather calm, generally, but it's a bit depressing. Both in class and in campus, the girls I see look like the "gentle sheep". Me "a crazy ***étrangère***". I'm very much disappointed by this university. My fellow students (counting only 5) are mostly dull & stupid. Teachers, well, their spoken English is terrible. The building it's lovely. We have even a special room for graduate students. Each student is given a good: desk & chair, locker, and a lamp. We can make coffee or tea in this room as well.

A professor came to our university from Wales, Britain, this spring.

He is 40, single. He teaches English and literature. I take one of his lectures, though it's not for the graduate students. His English is clear, and he's quite all right. But he still seems to be a little nervous, because he only came here at the beginning of April and obviously not yet gets used to the Japanese life.

One of the teachers is a hunch back. It's painful to see him. Nevertheless, I took his lecture, because he's said to be very, very clever.

The other day, I was introduced to a Canadian girl, who is studying in this university. She's interested in the Japanese women writers. Though it's only less than 3 years since she started studying Japanese, her Japanese is quite good. Besides, she's very pretty and clever. She may be of the same age as me.

On May 19, I'll be a temporary interpreter for an American old lady, who'll visit our university, accompanying her husband, a scientist, who is going to make a speech here. I'll show her round the city with one of my fellow students. Generally I don't like old ladies. But I accepted this job, because it'll give me a good experience.

I go to school, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. I'm quite busy. Apart from the preparations for the lectures, I must read many books for the M.A. thesis. And three times a week, I tutor the pupils at home at night. The only advantage of being busy is to be prevented from thinking too much. But still, I am very nervous, because I'm not used to this university life yet. Though very tired, I can't sometimes go to sleep easily, because the stimulus I receive in a single day is so great that it whirls and whirls in my head at night.

At home, the condition is terrible. I haven't spoken with my parents nearly for three weeks, except when the necessity impels me. When I left home this afternoon, my mother burst into tears.

I'm really very lonely & solitary both at home and in the university. I could talk with the fellow students, but the conversation flows only superficially. I'm making a very strong fence around myself, and whenever somebody touches it, I feel a great pain. You are one of few who entered through this fence.

I'm madly longing for Europe every day. It may be because the summer season is approaching. I feel as if I would be killed by the pressures of the memory.

I forbid myself to envy others and to say that I'm deserted by the world. It's me who deserted the world.

Comparing this year with the last year, I would not say that I was happier then than I am now. But it could be said that I was happier, at least in the sense that I could have a dream, I could always hear your ever sweet writing voice.

Are you all right recently, by the way? I may be already a "ghost" for you, may I not? Couldn't you sometimes give me a couple of sweet words? I'm not strong enough, I'm still lost and struggling in my solitary world.

Yours,

Namiko

May 11, 1977

Dear Hubert,

Thank you ever so much for your kind letter. It was really a bliss to me and it cheered me much, for I had been at the worst. But unfortunately I must tell you that I don't feel much better yet; I'm going downhill. It is really recently that I feel how absolutely right you were: this character won't change for life. I thought I changed as far as the suicide is concerned, but it wasn't right. For nearly two weeks the idea of suicide doesn't leave my mind day and night, day after day. Everything seems meaningless, and when I am too weak like this, I have no strength to shake off such a feeling of emptiness. Every thing and every one looks terrible and impersonal, it's like a hell, or worse than that. I'm now under an obsession of cutting my wrist with a knife, but I can't. If I had that kind of courage, I would have done it much earlier.

And you were also too right in saying once, that this period of wandering or explosion in the earlier part of the twenties won't be over so soon. I wonder how you could have such a downright insight. When you first said that, I didn't believe you much, but now I think it's true, I'm still awfully unsettled mentally and it may last for life too; I could never get grown up.

You say, I must make compromises, but what then, if I refuse to do it? To refuse to do this means to refuse to live, right? But I want to live according to my likings and dislikes, and if I go on like this, the society won't accept me. As I'm too idealistic and ambitious, and expect more than what the life could give, it's always intensely painful to live. Sometimes I can't forgive the very existence of other people around me. Maybe as long as I have such a view of life, it deserves me right. I wonder how I could get out of this terrible dilemma!

I can't deceive myself any longer. I'm fiercely angry with life.

And what is worse, I'm beginning to hate Japan terribly again; I wish I could escape from it. Here I feel as if I were a foreigner, for the way of living and the way of thinking here infuriates me.

Even if I manage to earn my own living a few years later, I couldn't live such a hard life alone. Marriage, this maybe one solution, but I'm too pessimistic of finding a person whom I could tolerate to live together. As what I'll be in the end of this life, I can't imagine myself but totally alone, no parents, no brother, no friend, no health, no wealth. What a fate it is having been lived with pain after pain and this!

You once said that if we're busy, we don't think much about this sort of thing. But it isn't true of me. For I'm quite busy these days, and still I think & think in just the same way as I used to do.

Maybe I could distract myself in one way or other some days later I hope so. Otherwise it's too much. It's beyond me. Will you please write to me back a little more frequently during this terrible period of mine, as far as it doesn't disturb your study? What I need now is the mental support of any kind. And will you also please accept my little request? Promise me to see me whenever I go to Europe next time, whenever it may be, or whatever you'll be doing then. If you would willingly say yes, it would be a constant consolation for me.

I'm awfully sorry to write such a gloomy letter as this, and to be very selfish when I'm too weak.

Last but not least, I wish you good luck in your exams, and I hope you'll have a nice summer vacation.

Namiko

P.S.
The picture postcard of Fuji san - it's late autumn.

June 9th, 1977

Dear Hubert,

I must tell you that this letter is absolutely going to be the last letter to you. I want to start a new life. (By the "new life" I don't mean to commit suicide.) To do this, I came to a conclusion that I must terminate any relation with you and get rid of all the memories concerning you. I have absolutely decided to stop writing to you and to refuse any further contact with you in Europe.

This letter may seem quite sudden in your eyes, but I thought over this matter again and again, and came to this conclusion.

I think that both of us have now come to a new turn of life. I believe you can go your own way according to your own judgements. Two weeks ago I met a man (a Japanese) and fell in love with him. Unless there arise any trouble, I want to marry him months later.

I do hope you will accept this declaration of mine good naturedly. Still, please do not forget my gratitude to you for the experiences I got from you.

I really wish you happiness and good luck.

Good-bye for ever.

Namiko

P.S.
Please do not write to me anymore.